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THREE CENTURIES OF FRENCH  
LITERATURE









FRANÇOIS RABELAIS

*From the Engraving by Giroux after the Drawing by Massard*

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EDITED BY  
SEYMOUR EATON

THREE CENTURIES  
OF  
FRENCH  
LITERATURE

FROM THE  
RENAISSANCE TO MODERN TIMES

THE MINNEAPOLIS JOURNAL EDITION

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## PREFATORY NOTE

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To every person who aims at culture, the literature of France should have a special interest. It is the literature of the world which has had the longest continued existence of vitality and strength. It is the embodiment of the thought and genius of the people in whom the feeling for art in literary expression has had its widest and most general manifestation. Finally, it is the literature which, in form and spirit, most profoundly affects our own.

The present book is intended for popular reading. A number of great writers have been selected, the names as a whole constituting a continuous representation of what is best in the literature of France during the three centuries chosen for study. These have had special treatment, and they are thus made to stand out in the history in their due importance. At the same time, a series of connecting studies is presented, which serves to trace the course of development of the literature of France in general. Although brief, these studies are so written as to lay due stress upon those phases of development which literary historians deem of most significance.

In order to make the book of the largest value to those

for whom it is intended there have been included in it a series of selections representative of the best work of the greater writers. It has been difficult to make suitable choices for representation in this way, for, of course, adequately to represent a great writer something more than a short selection is generally necessary. It will be found, however, that the selections here given do, as far as they go, fairly represent what is best in the work of the writers chosen for representation.

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# THE RENAISSANCE



# THREE CENTURIES OF FRENCH LITERATURE

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## I. THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY—THE RENAISSANCE.

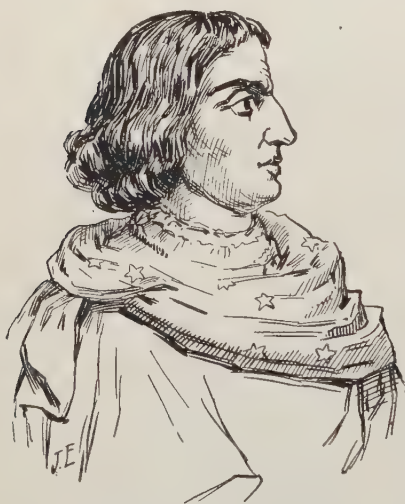
Taken all in all, the sixteenth century may fairly claim to be one of the most glorious in all French literature. The number of brilliant stars is not so great as in some later centuries. Nor is there any one star, or any but one, of such surpassing magnitude as some that are found in periods subsequent to it. But brilliant stars there are all through the epoch—many of them, and every part of the firmament is illuminated. That is to say, no department of literature is without its illustrious representative. But the chief cause of honor to the century is the fact that during it literature became modern. The indefinite literary forms and the crude literary art of mediævalism were replaced by forms and methods in literary expression—by an art, a style, a grace, a felicity of workmanship, which all subsequent ages have been able only to improve upon. The language available to literature was so developed, strengthened, enlarged, and fitted to literary uses, that it has ever since remained practically what the sixteenth century made it.

There is some similarity between the development of literature in France in the sixteenth century and the de-

velopment in England in the same period. But in England, that glorious outburst of literary power and art which characterized the beginning of its modern literature did not take place until toward the end of the century. It is associated with the name and reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603). In France, however, the development began earlier. It was not marked by such an outburst of power, and its force was extended equally throughout the whole century.

There were reasons for this difference. In England the introduction of the new ideas and the new hopes and aims

of the renaissance had been a matter of individual enterprise. The scholars that brought from Italy and Germany the influence of the "new learning" then fermenting in those countries, were not aided by any national movement. But in France the learning, the refinement, the hopes and aspirations, that were the outcome of the newly developed culture were introduced generally



PHILIPPE DE COMINES,  
(Early French writer.)  
1445-1511.

among the people by hosts of Frenchmen who had come personally in contact with it in Italy in the cruel wars they had waged there under Charles VIII, Louis XII,



and Francis I. These wars were Italy's undoing, but they were France's making. Besides, in France a great and honorable literature had already been produced. The renaissance, then, in France was early, and it was general. And it was not characterized by startling contrasts with the age that preceded it. It was, indeed, only as if an old soil had been newly fertilized. But in England the effect of the renaissance was as if a virgin soil had been not only fertilized, but sown to an hitherto unknown seed. In France the harvest was as it had been before, though stronger, richer, more abundant. In England the harvest had to be waited for, but when it came it was a new phenomenon—a phenomenon the like of which had never before appeared in the world's history.



RABELAIS.

Of the renaissance period in France the two greatest names in literature are Rabelais and Montaigne. RABELAIS (1495-1553) was the characteristic spirit of the first half of the century; MONTAIGNE (1533-1592) of the second half. RABELAIS, indeed, is one of the greatest names in all literature. He is little read now, because there is a coarseness, a wantonness, an ever-present protrusion and profusion of indecency in him that prevents him from being recommended by mature scholarship to ingenuous youth; and in this busy age

an antique writer (for, though technically a "modern," Rabelais is, nevertheless of course to-day an antique), if not read in youth is scarcely likely to be read at all. But in profundity of natural knowledge, in wealth and exuberance of language, in originality of thought and idea, in knowledge of human nature, in philosophic insight into the laws that govern mind and matter, in poetic imagination, in humor, in wit, in worldly common-sense, in sage wisdom, Rabelais remains to-day what he has been for over three centuries—one of the marvels of the world. His writing has the additional interest for the student in being the completest and most vivid reflection of the thought and spirit of his age that the world possesses.

Both Rabelais and Montaigne were prose writers, and it is one of the many glories of the sixteenth century that it was during its course that prose writing first began to be an instrument of literary expression of equal power and art with verse. But these great writers were only two among a host of writers in the sixteenth century who made prose the vehicle of their thought.

The most influential work of the age (if influence be measured by changes wrought in men's lives and thought and conduct) was the work of a young man of twenty-seven, JOHN CALVIN, whose "*Institutions of the Christian Religion*" (1536), is remarkable also as being the first great work in French written to establish truth by argument. Scarcely less influential, but exercising its influence not by argument, but by the implanting of fertilizing ideas in the minds of generous and ardent youth, was AMYOT'S "*Translation of Plutarch*" (1559). "To love Plutarch," said the high-spirited Henry of Navarre, "is to love me, for he was long the master of my youth." Nor was the literary influence of Amyot's work less pronounced than its



CLÉMENT MAROT.

influence on conduct and morals. It gave to France the example of her own vernacular speech being used as an instrument of the highest literary art. "We dunces," said

Montaigne, "would have been lost had not this book raised us from the mire. Thanks to it, we now venture to speak and write. It is our breviary."

The age was great in poetry also. There are two well-marked poetic movements noticeable; an earlier one and a later one. The earlier one is seen in the work of those literary artists that gathered in the court of Marguerite of Navarre (sister of Francis I). Of these MAROT (1497-1544) was the chief. But though those early poets of the century were impressed by the spirit of the renaissance, and caught something of its culture, they nevertheless pursued the ideals of the outgoing mediæval age. They invented nothing; they developed nothing; nevertheless their work had in it the flower and bloom of poesy.

The later movement is the more important. Indeed, it is one of the most important movements in all French literature. It is that which is due to the work of a body of writers known as the "Pléiade." The Pléiade is no fiction of the literary historian. It was, indeed, an actual thing, an association of seven men\* of high ideals and genuine poetic power, formed with the avowed purpose of making the French language a literary language equal to any that had been in the world's history. And to effect this purpose they employed the French vernacular with all the genius and ability they had—not in forms of poetic expression it had long been used to—but in forms adopted from the classical literatures of Greece and Rome, and from Italian literature; and also endeavored to infuse into it a large admixture of new words borrowed from the same sources. It was, of course, a purpose that would have failed utterly if it had not been taken up by men of such transcendent ability. As it was it succeeded. The poetic

---

\* Hence the name, from the Pleiades, the well-known cluster of "seven stars" in the constellation Taurus.

forms adopted by this coterie remained almost the sole forms used in French poetry for nearly three centuries; and the language which it adopted as the fit and proper language of poetical expression remained to all the future, in spite of the many reactions that set in against its use, the recognized standard poetical language of the nation. Of course, as time went on, it was much modified by other influences. But the work of the Pléiade never lost its vitality.

Of the Pléiade **RON-**  
**SARD** (1524-1585) was  
the head. Probably  
no poet ever enjoyed  
greater contemporary  
honor. Kings and  
queens showered their  
favors on him. Eliza-  
beth of England and



RONSARD.

Mary of Scotland sent him gifts. Charles IX even invited him to sit on the throne with him. Nor was his honor merely contemporaneous. In this century, even, his fame, at least, for a time, was as great as ever.

## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM RABELAIS.

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### THE ABBEY OF THELEMA.\*

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*From "Gargantua."*

The character of Friar John, which may be gathered from the story of his exploits in the vineyard, makes him the very last man in the world to create the Abbey of Thelema. Of this, however, Rabelais was careless. The abbey had to be created somehow, because it was in his mind. The friar was ready to his hand, and he confided its foundation to him, albeit unworthy.

This Abbey of Thelema is one of the most graceful and most noble fancies that ever entered into the brain of man. It forms a fit pendant to the scheme of education which its founder drew up for a young prince. The Order of Thelema is a society composed entirely of young people living together in the freedom of gentlemanhood, unrestricted by any conventional and useless rules. They are to learn, by watching the wishes and wants of each other, how to live; they are to be occupied all day in study, in manly exercises, or in the acquirements of womanly accomplishments; they are to be entirely free from the petty cares and anxieties of the ignoble life; they are to live in accordance with the laws of nature, and are therefore to be exempt from disease. The abbey itself is a miracle of architecture. It is to be the house of the highest expression of art, refinement, and luxury. When the monks and sisters have learned all that the Society is able to teach, they may leave it, two by two, and go forth into the world, examples for all men and women to follow.

Friar John was offered the Abbey of Seuilly—we are still in the neighborhood of Chinon—which he refused; then that of St. Florent, or Bourgueil—also close to Chinon—or both, if he liked. But again he refused. "How," he asked, "am I, who cannot rule myself, to rule others? But," he adds, "if you think I have done you, or may henceforth do you, good service, give me leave to found an abbey after my own mind."

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\* The translation, and also the introductory and explanatory notes are by Sir Walter Besant in "*Rabelais*" in "*Foreign Classics for English Readers*" series.



Gargantua thereupon made him a grant of land upon the river Loire, on which he might establish his monastery. It was instituted for an order of monks and nuns whose rules should be the opposite of those of all other orders. Between them Gargantua and the excellent friar arranged their plan.

First, as all other convents are walled round, this must be without wall of any kind.

Moreover, seeing there are certain convents in this world whereof the custom is, that if any women, even honorable and modest women, come in, the ground is swept over which they have passed, it was ordained that if any man or woman belonging to a religious order should by chance enter, all the rooms should be thoroughly cleansed through which they had passed. And because in the monasteries of the world all is compassed, limited, and regulated by hours, it was decreed that here there should be neither clock nor dial, but that according to opportunities and occasions should be conducted all their work. For, said Gargantua, the greatest loss of time that he knew was to count the hours. What good comes of it? And the greatest dotage in the world was to govern himself by the sound of a bell, and not by the dictation of judgment and common-sense.

*Item*, Because at that time they put no women into nunneries but such as were either purblind, lame, crooked, ill-favored, misshapen, lunatic, senseless, or corrupt; nor any men but those that were either sickly, low-born, simple, or good-for-nothing; therefore was it ordained that here should be admitted no women who were not fair, well-featured, and of sweet disposition—nor any men who were not comely, personable and well-conditioned.

*Item*, Because in the convents of women men come not but privily and by stealth, it was enacted that here there should be no women in case there be not men, nor any men in case there be no women.

*Item*, Because both men and women who are once received into religious orders have been constrained after the year of probation to stay in them all the days of their life, it was ordered that all whatever, men or women, admitted within this abbey, should have full leave to depart in peace and contentment, whenever it should seem good to them to do so.

*Item*, That, considering how religious men and women do ordinarily take the three vows of chastity, of poverty, and of

obedience—it was ordered that here they might be honorably married, that they might be rich, and that they might live at liberty. As regards the legitimate age, the women were to be admitted from ten to fifteen, and the men from twelve till eighteen.

The preliminaries being agreed upon, the building was at once commenced. In the description of the building, Rabelais, who, like Victor Hugo, never touches a subject of which he is not master, has given so minute an account of a great and magnificent building that architects have succeeded in reproducing the plan and elevation which Rabelais had in his head. Greater descriptive power has never been shown than so to set forth a building as to enable a draftsman nearly three hundred and fifty years later to represent on paper exactly such a building as the author pictured. Suffice it to say that the abbey was conceived in the spirit of the greatest luxury and magnificence. Stately fountains, spacious galleries, tilt-yards, riding-courts, theatres, swimming-baths, the garden of Déduit, or Delight, by the river-side, a labyrinth, tennis and ball courts, orchards planted with fruit trees, a park full of deer, butts for guns, crossbow, and archery, stables, a falconry, a “venery,” where beagles and hounds were kept; and outside the abbey rows of houses in which dwelt, for the convenience of the fraternity, all sorts of handicraftsmen, such as goldsmiths, lapidaries, jewelers, embroiderers, tailors, gold-drawers, velvet-weavers, tapestry-makers, upholsterers, and others, who worked for the monks and nuns of the new order.

No novelist or romance-writer has ever conceived a more delightful abode than the Abbey of Thelema, or a more splendid and magnificent foundation.

All their life was spent, not by laws, statutes, or rules, but according to their own free will and pleasure. They rose when they thought good; they ate, drank, worked, slept, when the desire came to them. No one woke them up; none forced them to eat, drink, or to do any other thing whatever. So had Gargantua established it. In their rule there was but this one clause:

FAY CE QUE VOULDRAS

*(Do what you will);*

because men who are free, well born, well bred, and conversant with honorable company, have naturally an instinct which prompts them to virtuous actions and withdraws them from



vice. This is called honor. . . . By this liberty they entered into a laudable emulation to do all of them what they saw pleased one. If one of them, either a monk or a sister, should say, 'Let us drink,' they would all drink. If any one of them said, 'Let us play,' they all played. If one said, 'Let us go and take our pleasure in the fields,' they all went. . . . So nobly were they taught that there was not one among them but could read, write, sing, play upon musical instruments, speak five or six languages, and compose in them either in verse or in measured prose. Never were seen knights more valiant, more gallant, more dexterous on horse or foot, more vigorous, more active, more skilled in the use of arms than were these. Never were seen ladies so proper, so handsome, less whimsical, more ready with hand, with needle, or with every honest and free womanly action, than were these. For this reason, when the time came that any man of the said abbey, either at the request of his parents or for some other cause had a mind to go out of it, he carried along with him one of the ladies, namely, her whom he had chosen before for his mistress, and they were married together. And if they had formerly lived in Thelema in good devotion and amity, they continued therein, and increased it to a greater height in their state of matrimony; so that they entertained that mutual love till the end of their days just as on the very first day of their wedding.

The dream of the abbey is abandoned as soon as set down. We hear no more of it. Friar John, when we meet him again, has forgotten it. Certainly this coarse *biberon* of a monk was not the man to be the head of an abbey in which gentlefolk alone were to be admitted; but an objection of this kind may be taken to most of the Rabelaisian episodes; the author conceives vividly in portions, but imperfectly as a connected whole. There is nothing more outrageous in making Friar John propose the Abbey of Thelema than there is in making the wise and valiant Gargantua comb cannon-balls out of his hair and pick pilgrims out of his teeth. But the abbey! Would that we could have heard more of it! Would that the time were yet arrived when young men and maidens could live together in the sacred and honorable fraternity imagined by this prophet of a perfected humanity.

The description of the abbey appears to me the noblest dream of the sixteenth century, where so many things seemed possible, and men's minds rose to such grand conceptions. It is a vision which should have come to some great poet and been

wedded to immortal verse. In this monastery, which is the world at its best, there is to be no ugliness or deformity, either moral or physical; there are to be no stupid rules, no chains of custom or convention—everyone's conscience is to be his guide; there are no chapels, no masses, no beads, no bells—every brother communicates alone in his cell with his God; there are no fasts; there is none of the degrading servitude to law which troubles the outside world. It is a society of scholars, students, and artists, gentle all, living together according to the rules of nature, restrained by common-sense, honor, and the love of God, continuously learning to respect more and more the mysteries of that inconceivable marvel which we call creation, by study and mutual love; advancing always by the road of unselfish labor to the higher life which mostly, to us of darkened spirit, seems so unattainable. They are always genial, cheerful, and thoughtful for each other. There are none of the feastings and revelings which do very well for the court of Grandgousier [Gargantua's father] and the common people. The *damoiseaux* and *damoiselles* of Thelema do not think of feasting. Their thoughts, like those of Rabelais when he wrote these chapters, are set on higher things. Love among them is free, and marriage the natural outcome of their life. All is noble; all is delightful; all is elevated; all is well bred and worthy; and, to crown everything, from a Rabelaisian point of view, there is not a priest in the place.

## II. MONTAIGNE.

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It was only in the sixteenth century, the century of the bloody religious wars, which has been called the most tragic in history, that France really felt all the influence of the renaissance. Under the iron hand of Richelieu in the following century, France, unified and pacified, was prepared for the glorious reign of Louis XIV. At the same time, all ideas of liberty, of the rights of man and of his aspirations, were crushed beneath the despotism of absolute monarchy; and the literature of the period, the writings of three men—La Boétie, Rabelais, Montaigne—slept—only to awaken formidable instruments for a nation then developed in the middle of the eighteenth century.

While they lived, few could truly understand them, for the necessity of such ideas was not yet realized. Man in the sixteenth century was interested in his own doings as much, perhaps, as he is to-day, but he did not know it; he had not reached that stage of intellectual development which leads to self-study, to the analysis of cause and effect.

Of the three great writers just mentioned, the most widely known is Michael de Montaigne. Born in 1533, when the renaissance had full sway in matters of education, he was carefully instructed in the ancient authors by a father who was an enthusiastic admirer



MONTAIGNE.

of the classics. He was, much against his will, twice elected to the mayoralty of Bordeaux, in which position he does not appear to have distinguished himself.

In fact, he took very little part in the tragic events which upset the whole country during his lifetime.

Apparently Montaigne experienced only moderate joys and sorrows, and was incapable of any others. He married, at the age of thirty-three, a woman who evidently fulfilled the condition of "mediocrity" which he sought in everything; and that he was an indifferent father we can judge from the fact that he does not know exactly how many children he had. For two persons, however, he appears to have had a sincere affection—for his father, and for his friend La Boétie.

Two editions of his essays were published by himself in 1580 and in 1588; but the last, and probably the best, original edition we have is the one published by Mdlle. de Gournay in 1595, three years after the death of Montaigne, from a copy revised and enlarged by the author during the four years preceding his death.

Though some readers of Montaigne's time were interested in his essays, hardly any understood their depth. At first sight his book seems made up of thoughts thrown at random on paper when they chanced to come to him. The contents of his chapters do not always respond to their title. He jumps from one subject to another, or, rather, he passes from one to another, following one idea for a time and then the next idea that comes to his mind. Yet, even when he is playing truant, he pursues a definite aim, and here he is on the same ground as the great Molière. Man is all he looks at, all he paints. And man, being eternally the same, it is not only a picture of his contemporaries that he gives us, but just as much a picture of our own century in a different garb. The great author, like the great artist, is never really old-fashioned in the eyes of the generations that follow him. This is the

real test of genius, and Montaigne stands it as well as Molière, as well as Shakespeare.

Even in his days those who read the essays were vaguely awakened to the fact that the study of man is the greatest of all studies; that the exact painting of the struggle between good and evil is more thrillingly interesting than the description of fictitious beings, impossible heroes. In the next century we can already see the influence of Montaigne in the struggle between passion and duty which we find in the French classic tragedy and in the character studies of Molière; but it is especially in the eighteenth century that we can observe to what an extent the philosophers strengthened their arguments against tyranny with the works of La Boétie and Montaigne. And to-day, at the close of the nineteenth century, with all the knowledge acquired since the essays were written, men and books are still influenced by the so-called careless philosopher of the sixteenth century, and we can all, even the wisest of us, repeat his motto: "*Que sais-je?*"—"What Do I Know?"

Every man, says Montaigne, "bears the whole form of human condition," and therefore by studying himself, as a type of the species, he was bound to see man as he is. And how did he see him? I will quote here one of our critics, who says:

"Man, as Montaigne understood him, is an animal who is distinguished from the others by a singular and remarkable elasticity. He is superior because he is illimited. The other animals are penned up in their nature—that is to say, in the limits of their needs of nutrition and reproduction. Man has no prescribed limits. How high or how low he can go no one here below can know. He obeys nature—and, also, custom,



which is often directly opposed to nature. He obeys custom—and also personal conscience, which not seldom is opposed to both nature and custom.”

Giving him such an illimited elasticity for good or evil, we can easily imagine how intensely interesting the study of man must have been to one who belongs to that class of beings who by temperament can observe the golden mean, and who on that account can see more clearly both what is going on above and below them.

If, however, in the essays there is a remarkable study of man as he was at the time of Rome and Greece, as he was in the sixteenth century, and as he should be in all centuries, Montaigne's work, nevertheless, will not rank with some of the great productions of the human mind because his horror of all effort prevented him from making a well-composed and well-defined whole. This lack of energy had, at least, one good result. It gave him that love for a quiet life and for books which kept him away from the strifes of the period and enabled him keenly to observe himself and others.

Strange to say, his very faults contributed to his value as an author, for while Ronsard and La Pléiade were laboriously striving to create artificially, by the in-taking of words coined from Latin and Greek, a language worthy of a great literature, Montaigne, avoiding work, ingeniously gave us a most precious document of the language of the time, purified by perfect good taste and enriched by the large vocabulary of a learned, intellectual man. In his capricious review of a large number of subjects we find a deep knowledge of life and of the human heart, and this knowledge is not given to us in the pedantic fashion of most moralists, but with an amiable frankness which gives such a

charm to his essays that they are still read to-day, not only with profit but with pleasure.

Montaigne has been called a skeptic—in fact, he has remained the most popular representative of skeptical indifference. This belief is due to Pascal, and later to the philosophers of the eighteenth century, who, perhaps purposely, misunderstood his philosophy. There is certainly no trace of skepticism in his chapters devoted to the education of children. His so-called skepticism consists in saying that metaphysical truths are inaccessible and that we must not seek them.

By the influence of his essays on the thought of the following centuries, by his picture of man in every conceivable phase of life, by his language so distinctly personal, Montaigne is a precious and unique representation of the sixteenth century and its literature.

EDOUARD P. BAILLOT.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Although the literature of the fifteenth century in France is not in itself of the greatest importance, and though it was marked by many signs of decadence, yet, side by side with these, there may be noted in it other signs pointing to a new growth of letters. The great movement which is called the renaissance, and which resulted mainly, though not wholly, from the recurrence to Greek and Roman literature and art as models, was working in Italy throughout the century, and the close connection between French and Italians



resulting from the wars of Charles VIII. and Louis XII. was certain to spread its influence northward. Independently of this the studies of native Frenchmen pointed in the same direction. Moreover, in the fifteenth-century literature of France are to be found other promising signs. In the works of Antoine de la Salle satire assumed a wider range and a more polished tone than in those of the fabliau writers. The passion for dramatic compositions, which enabled spectators to sit out mysteries that took weeks in the performance, was the certain forerunner of a great development of this class of literature. The gradual disuse of the allegorical fashion of love-poetry promised something more personal and genuine in this direction, as in others the discovery of new countries promoted a general spirit of adventure and inquiry in intellectual as well as commercial matters; the invention of printing gave an otherwise impossible opportunity to this spirit; and, lastly, the great religious revolution, of which Erasmus was the forerunner and Luther the author, gave the amplest exercise to men's power of speaking and writing. From the very first the reformers fought the battle of the vernacular against the learned tongues, both as a matter of religious belief and of worldly prudence, for it was by the use of the vernacular that they gained adherents. In France, especially, the literary influence of the reformation was immense, and it would hardly be too much to say that the "*Psalms*" of Marot and the "*Institutions*" of Calvin set for the first time the example of works destined to exercise a wide popular influence in French verse and in French prose.—SAINTSBURY.

## II.

For whence comes the interest we take in all these personages and what is its true nature? Montaigne will tell us it is "that every man carries in his own person the model of the human condition." The lines are Juvenal's, and without a doubt Montaigne is sufficiently nourished on Latin, his book is sufficiently that of a "humanist," or even it may be of a pedant, for one to suspect him of having borrowed the aphorism from the Latin satirist. This great reader is a great pilferer, and he has not always indicated his larcenies, as if he feared in truth that were he to have done so there would remain nothing of his entire book. A very useless precaution, but an almost vainer fear. Were the "*Essais*" only a collection, or, if I may risk this expression, a string, a chaplet of quotations, that would not prevent them being all that they are in the history of our literature; the first book in which a man formed the project of depicting himself, considering himself as an example of average humanity, and of enriching the natural history of humanity with the discoveries he made in his own person.—FERDINAND BRUNETIÈRE.

## III.

Montaigne was born at a château in Périgord in the year 1533. His father, whom Montaigne always remembered with affectionate reverence, was a man of original ideas. He intrusted the infant to the care of peasants, wishing to attach him to the people; educated him in Latin as if his native tongue, rousing him at morning from sleep to the sound of music. From his sixth to his thirteenth year Montaigne was at the Col-



MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE

*From an Engraving by C. E. Wagstaff after a painting by an unknown artist*



lège de Guyenne, where he took the leading parts in Latin tragedies composed by Muret and Buchanan. In 1554 he succeeded his father as councilor in the *court des aides* of Perigueux, the members of which were soon afterward incorporated in the parliament of Bordeaux. But nature had not destined Montaigne for the duties of the magistracy. He saw too many sides of every question; he chose rather to fail in justice than in humanity. In 1565 he acquired a large fortune by marriage, and, having lost his father, he retired from public functions in 1570 to enjoy a tranquil existence of meditation and of rambling through books. He had published a year before, in fulfillment of his father's desire, a translation of the "Theologia Naturalis" of Raimond de Sebonde, a Spanish philosopher of the fifteenth century, and now he occupied himself in preparing for the press the writings of his dead friend, La Boétie. Love for his father and love for his friend were the two passions of Montaigne's life. From 1571 to 1580 he dwelt in retreat, in company with his books and his ideas, indulging his humor for tranquil freedom of the mind. It was his custom to enrich the margins of his books with notes, and his earliest essays may be regarded as an extension of such notes. Plutarch and Seneca were, above all, his favorites. Afterward the volume which he read with most enjoyment and annotated most curiously was that of his own life.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

#### IV.

Whether Montaigne himself invented the famous title "*Essays*" or not is a matter of the very smallest importance. It is certain that he was first to give the

word its modern meaning, though he dealt with his subjects in a spirit of audacious desultoriness, which



PASCAL.

many of his successors have endeavored to imitate, but which few have imitated successfully. His nominal subject is, as a rule, merely a starting point or, at the most, a text. He allows himself to be diverted from it by any game which crosses his path, and diverges as readily from his new direction. Abundant citation from the classics is one of his chief characteristics, but the two main points which differentiate him are, first, the audacious egotism and frankness with which he discourses of his private affairs and exhibits himself in undress; secondly, the flavor of subtle skepticism which he diffuses over his whole work.

Both these are susceptible of a good deal of misconception, and both no doubt have been a good deal misconstrued. His egotism, like most egotism, is a compound of frankness and affectation, and its sincerity

is not, as an attraction, equal to the easy garrulity for which it affords an occasion of display. His skepticism is not exuberant, like that of Rabelais; nor sneering, like that of Voltaire; nor despairing, like that of Pascal; nor merely inquisitive and scholarly, like that of Bayle. There is no reason for disbelieving Montaigne's sincere and conscious orthodoxy in the ecclesiastical sense.—SAINTSBURY.

## V.

He did not aim at the distinction of being a great writer, still less of being a great man. Yet he unquestionably takes a high place among the representative men of humanity. But it is not as Montaigne the skeptic that he should be known, nor Montaigne the egoist, nor Montaigne the epicurean, but as Montaigne the sincere.—FERDINAND BOCHER.



## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM MONTAIGNE

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### ON CONVERSATION.\*

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*From "The Essays."*

"The essay which has generally been considered as Montaigne's masterpiece is that on '*The Art of Conversation*,' which was one of his last written, and stands eighth in the Third Book. Pascal has called it 'incomparable,' and his judgment of Montaigne is, to say the least, not partial. The chapter is discursive, like nearly all the rest; if it teaches the art of conversation at all, it is by the example of how a good talker may handle, with a light and sparkling touch, a dozen subjects strung together by the very slenderest thread of connection. But it is not really what we call 'conversation' which he here discusses, though in that art we may be sure that Montaigne was a proficient. The essay is rather the laying down of certain rules and principles on which an intellectual argument or discussion (which Montaigne declares he loved) should be conducted in order to secure at once free expression of opinion and command of temper, to show how gentlemen may dispute without thinking it necessary to quarrel."—REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS.

The most fruitful and natural exercise of the mind, to my thinking is converse with others; I find the practice more delightful than any other action of our life; and it is the reason why, if at this moment I were forced to make the choice, I would rather consent, I do believe, to lose my sight, than to lose my power of hearing and speaking. The Athenians, and yet more the Romans, held this exercise in high honor in their schools; in our own times, the Italians retain some traces of it, to their

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\*Of course only a portion of the essay is given here. The translation is by the Rev. W. Lucas Collins, M.A., in "*Montaigne*," in the excellent "*Foreign Classics for English Readers*" series. The translation is an admirable one.



great advantage, as one may see if one compares their conversation with ours. The study of books is but a weak and languishing excitement, which fails to warm us, while conversation teaches us and exercises us both at once. If I converse with a man of vigorous intellect and an able fencer, he thrusts me in the sides, he gives me point right and left; his thoughts draw out mine; jealousy, glory, antagonism urge and rouse me to something above myself; unanimity is a quality altogether tiresome in conference. But inasmuch as our minds are strengthened by collision with other vigorous and well-regulated minds, so 'tis not to be expressed how much they lose and degenerate by the perpetual contact and association with minds that are frivolous and weak; no contagion spreads like that; I know by long experience how much it is all worth a yard. I love disputation and argument; but it is only with a few persons, and for my own entertainment only; for to serve as a spectacle to the great, and to make a parade of one's wit and fluency and powers of conversation, I hold to be a very unbecoming part for a man of honor. . . .

I engage in argument and discussion with great ease and freedom, since opinions find in me a very bad soil to strike deep into or take firm root. No propositions astonish me, and no belief offends me, however opposite it may be to my own. There is no fancy so frivolous or extravagant as not to seem to me a natural product of the human mind. . . . Contradiction of my opinion, therefore, neither offends me nor puts me out; it only rouses me and puts me on my mettle. We shrink from having our judgment challenged; we ought rather to court and lay ourselves out for it, especially when it comes in the form of argument and not dictation. Whenever we are contradicted we are apt to consider not whether the contradiction be just, but how we are to get the better of it, right or wrong; instead of opening our arms to it, we thrust out our claws. I could bear to be even roughly handled by my friends—"You are an ass—you are dreaming." I love plain and bold speech between gallant men, and that our words should go along with our thoughts; we must harden our ears and steel ourselves against that over-tenderness as to ceremonious language. I like a companionship and converse that are vigorous and manly, a friendship that prides itself on the keenness and vigor of its intercourse, even by biting and scratching, as in love: it is not

strong and generous enough if it be civilized and formal, if it fears all rough shocks, and walks with mincing steps. When a man opposes me he awakes my attention, not my anger. I approach him that contradicts me as him that instructs me; the cause of truth ought to be the common cause of both of us. But how will he answer? The passion of anger will have already marred his judgment; wrath has taken possession of him instead of reason. It would be a very good thing to refer the decision of such disputes to a wager; that there should be some material evidence of our defects to the end that we might the better remember them; and that my servant might be able to say to me: "Your ignorance and obstinacy have cost you in this last year, on twenty several occasions, a hundred crowns." For my part, I welcome and embrace truth in whosoever hands I find it, and submit to it cheerfully, nay, hold out my arms to it in token of submission, as soon as I see it approaching in the distance; and, provided always it does not take an imperious and dictatorial tone, I take pleasure in being set right, often rather on grounds of civility and conviction, because I love to gratify and encourage the liberty of admonition by my readiness to give way, even to my own cost.

It is very difficult, nevertheless, to win the men of my day to this way of thinking. They have not the courage to correct, because they have not the courage to bear to be corrected; and they always speak with insincerity in each other's presence. I take such pleasure in being judged and criticised, that I am indifferent in which of the two fashions it be done. My own fancies contradict and refute themselves so often, that it is all the same to me if some one else does it, especially as I concede to his authority only just so much as I please. But I fall out at once with any who deal in such high-handed fashion (as I know some who do) as to resent their assertions not being implicitly believed, and take it as an affront if one makes any difficulty in accepting them. . . . In truth, I prefer meeting in discussion with those who hit me hard, than with those who are afraid of me. It is a poor and unwholesome satisfaction to have to deal with those who admire us and pay us deference. . . . I feel much prouder of the victory I gain over myself, when in the very heat of the dispute I make myself bend to the force of my opponent's reasoning, than of any victory I may gain over him through his weakness. In short, I can receive and bear

any kind of attack that is made directly and fairly, however weak it be; but I am too impatient of those which are made in irregular fashion. I never heat myself as to the matter of the argument; to me all opinions are the same, and I am almost indifferent to victory on any question. I can argue with good temper for a day together, provided the argument be conducted in a regular way; it is not ability or cleverness I look for so much as orderly and pertinent discussion. I mean that kind of pertinency which we always see in the disputes of country people and shop boys, never amongst ourselves; if they get violent, that is only rudeness—so do we, too; but their noise and impatience never turns them from their subject, their assertions keep to the point; if they interrupt each other, if they will not listen, at any rate they understand each other. A man always answers me well enough, if he does but answer what I say; but when the dispute becomes disorderly and confused, I leave the thing; and I insist upon observance of form with some degree of anger and impatience, and so fall into a stubborn, bitter, and masterful style of disputing, which I have to blush for afterward. It is impossible to deal fairly with a fool. It is not only my judgment which gets warped in contest with such an irrational opponent, but my conscience, too.

Our disputes ought to be put under restrictions and penalties, like other offenses of the tongue; what mischief do they not breed and encourage, governed and directed as they always are by passion! We quarrel first with the arguments and then with the men. We learn to argue only that we may contradict; and every one contradicting and being contradicted, it follows therefrom that the result of argument is the loss and annihilation of truth.

### III.—THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY— THE CLASSICAL DRAMA.

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The sixteenth century was an age of freshness, of naïveté, of exuberance, of invention, and of true and unmistakable inspiration. Its writers, whether in prose or poetry, followed no models, or, if they did, the models were of their own choosing. Yet just because of this vigor, this power, this forceful individual character, it was also an age in which the forms and the language of literature became more or less settled. The seventeenth century accepted what the sixteenth century had set up as standard, and followed it.

Yet not wholly so; or else seventeenth-century literature would have been much less stereotyped and characterless than it actually proved to be. Unfortunately its opening years were dominated by a critical influence which made even the following of models impossible, except within narrow and well-defined limits. MALHERBE (1555-1628), who was recognized in his day both as a poet and a critic, but whose critical authority was immensely disproportionate to his merits, was to French literature what Pope one hundred years later was to English literature, only with infinitely larger possibilities for ill. Later on in the century a greater influence made itself felt, unfortunately toward the

same end. BOILEAU (1636-1711) continued the dominion of the same narrow rules of taste and art which Malherbe had instituted. French poetry ceased to be vital and effective. For two hundred years no great French poet can be named.

There were apparent exceptions in the great seventeenth-century dramatists. CORNEILLE (1606-1684) and RACINE (1639-1699) are among the foremost names in French literature. But both these great geniuses were weighted down by the critical standards of their time. Neither of them, apart from the dramatic excellence of his work, can be called a great poet. Corneille's passion is mainly oratorical and declamatory; Racine's mainly a



BOILEAU.

refined and highly polished improving upon the workmanship of antecessors. Both, in deference to the uninstructed preferences of their age, meekly followed models of dramatic construction that had been set up by the dramatic writers of the previous century—models that in the first place had been adopted from the dramatic literature of Greece and Rome—the plays, for example, of Euripides and Seneca. Dominated by traditionary standards such as these, and in the literary treatment of their

plays by the narrow, critical standards of their day, their work could not be other than deficient in individuality. It may be faultless, perhaps, but it lacks both in originality and power.

The three great names of imaginative literature in the seventeenth century are CORNEILLE, RACINE, and MOLIÈRE. Corneille and Molière will be the subject of a more detailed notice in these lessons. RACINE, whose genius many, especially many Frenchmen, think to be quite equal to either of theirs, deserves some special notice here. Both Corneille and Racine were writers of tragedy, and that fact invites to comparison. Racine, neither personally nor as an artist, had the sturdy rugged character which his great predecessor possessed. Corneille had faculties that resembled some of those of Shakespeare. Racine, while destitute of these, had far more art. His best plays are the ne plus ultra of the dramatic handicraft of the age and country in which he lived. His one great distinguishing characteristic is his power in the portrayal of the varying qualities of woman's love under tragic conditions. Racine was not a high-principled man. Many ungenerous and unworthy acts were recorded against him. He was ungracious as a disciple to Corneille; he was unfaithful as a friend to Molière. But his art was noble, and, though it was cold, it was brilliant.

It is, then, in the drama, and especially in tragedy, that French poetry in the seventeenth century had such representation as may be described as being of the first class. The only poet, not a dramatist, of the whole age that had any real poetic power, any real originality, or individuality, was LA FONTAINE (1621-1695) the immortal author of the "*Fables*" and the "*Tales*." But even La Fontaine was a clever versifier, a brilliant teller of tales





JEAN BAPTISTE RACINE





in poetic form, rather than a poet. The gifts of poetic imagination and poetic insight were not his.

Equally destitute of striking merit, though prodigious in its extent, was the realm of prose romance in the earlier half of the century. But there was one department of prose in which French literature in that age achieved a success that will last for all time—the department of philosophic and theologic speculation. DESCARTES (1596-1650) was not only the master of a prose style which in its own realm only that of Plato can match, but he was also one of the greatest philosophers, one of the greatest metaphysicians, the world has known. PASCAL (1623-1662) was the master of a prose style which when employed in irony, as it was in the famous "*Provincial Letters*," proved to be the most polished, disturbing and effective ever shown in literature. Besides, he was the possessor of an intellect which in the realm of pure mathematics and in natural science can be compared only with that of Newton.

#### IV. CORNEILLE.

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Among those writers of the seventeenth century who are called the classics in the first rank we must place Pierre Corneille, for if his work as a whole shows great inequalities it is none the less worthy to be studied and admired.

A list of his works would alone fill the space given to this study. From 1629 to 1674 Corneille wrote thirty-three plays, eighteen of which are strictly tragedies, and the others lyrical tragedies or operas, tragedy ballets, and comedies. We will, however, following Corneille's example, divide the plays into classes according to their merit, and consider only the first class, in which we will put not the tragedies given by the author himself as the best, but those that posterity, a much better judge, counts as his masterpieces. They are "*Le Cid*," "*Horace*," "*Cinna*" and "*Polyeucte*," four tragedies either one of which is alone sufficient to make its author one of the greatest dramatic poets of the world.

Pierre Corneille was born at Rouen in 1606 and died in Paris in 1684. At eighteen years of age he was admitted to the bar, but, although he seems to have been punctual in performing the duties of the two offices he had bought and which he kept for several years, nevertheless his poetical instincts did not allow him long to devote himself exclusively to his profession, and in 1629

his first comedy, "*Mélite*," was played in Paris, where it met with great success. Yet, in spite of some good verses, "*Mélite*," is considered to-day as a most uninteresting comedy.

In 1636 "*Le Cid*," the first masterpiece of Corneille and of the classical drama, was played at the Théâtre du Marais. It was followed in 1640 by "*Horace*" and "*Cinna*," and in 1643 by "*Polycкте*." Corneille's creative power was therefore at its best during those seven years beginning with "*Le Cid*" and ending with "*Polycкте*." Before and after these two dates his work is inferior.

Can we say that the great success of "*Le Cid*" is due only to the merit of the tragedy? Shall we not add that the enthusiasm it created was caused in part by the state of the French stage when it appeared? France has had since then two other epochs in which the public demanded and obtained a masterpiece which would overthrow the worn-out drama of the day and give a new era of dramatic poetry. The first was in 1830, when Victor Hugo's "*Hernani*" gave the death blow to the then antiquated and decadent classic drama; the second in our days, when Rostand's "*Cyrano de Bergerac*," with its ideal hero, made France and the whole literary world breathe a sigh of relief at being delivered, for a time at least, from the moralists and psychologists who for years had made of the French stage a dissecting table for the human heart.

Since the renaissance had brought into France from Italy that admiration for the ancients which was to have such an influence on French literature not a masterpiece had been produced. This is the period when a writer (Hardy)\* could produce "six hundred" plays and have

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\* Alexandre Hardy, 1560-1631.

them performed; when euphuism passed the channel, cultism the Pyrenees, and the conceits the Alps, to kill with their absurdities what remained of literary good sense and render necessary the iron rules which were to bind the French drama for two centuries. Such was the situation of the theater in France when Corneille gave at last a tragedy based upon the analysis of moral truths.

But if the public welcomed with enthusiasm the new and beautiful poetry, as well as the field for thought which it opened, "*Le Cid*" was not to find favor in the eyes of the immortals of the academy, or, rather, in those of Richelieu, who was their leader. The academy condemned the play, declaring it to be "against the rules"—the unities of Aristotle. It is true that Corneille had taken liberties with two of these unities, but Aristotle himself could not have been as severe as were Richelieu and the academy. But this accusation was only the pretext—the real cause was that the tragedy wounded Richelieu's pride both as a statesman and as an author, for the cardinal minister was also a playwright, and, in his own opinion, a superior one. We must remember that "*Le Cid*," based upon the play of the Spaniard, Guilhem de Castro, shows a great admiration for Spanish valor, and that Richelieu was then engaged in a war with Spain. Besides, Corneille in his tragedy not only excuses but favors dueling, which the minister was trying to suppress by the most severe and bloody edicts.

Corneille, as it has been remarked by several critics, did not bring any new ideas on the stage; he simply elevated those of the tragedies already written. The public taste in his days demanded heroic men and deeds, extraordinary adventures. Corneille responded to this demand, but he gave an aim to heroism, a noble one, for it



P. CORNEILLE

PIERRE CORNEILLE

*From the Engraving by Dequevauviller after the Painting by Le Brun*



battles for honor and duty. His men and women may be too great, measured by our own standard, but they are not impossible. We feel as we follow his heroes to their victory over passion that they are not, perhaps, as we are, but rather, as La Bruyère says, as we ought to be.

"*Polyeucte*," "*Pauline*," "*Sévère*" express in every shape the beauty of self-sacrifice, the first in giving up all earthly ambition and joys in answer to the call of his conscience, the second in tearing from her heart an affection incompatible with her ideas of duty, and the third in defending the Christians although he did not share their faith. In this tragedy Corneille has given the most pure and most touching expression to the highest sentiments which reason, duty, and faith can inspire.

After "*Polyeucte*" begins the decline of Corneille, for, although in the "*Death of Pompeius*," played also in 1643, we still find the genius of the great poet, we are obliged to recognize weaknesses which did not exist in the four tragedies preceding.

Here again we might with some reason look for the cause of this decadence in the spirit of the time. From 1636 to 1643, when the four great plays were written, greatness was everywhere in men as well as in events. But after the death of Richelieu everything declines. The great captains give way to adventurers, the heroes of the Thirty Years' War to the puppets of the Fronde. This is the period of interminable romantic novels, of which Mlle. de Scudéry's "*Grand Cyrus*" is an excellent specimen; of extravagant men like Cyrano de Bergerac, author of a good tragedy, but known especially by his "*Histoires Comiques*." The great men, Bossuet, Molière, La Fontaine, were still unknown, Corneille was all alone, and with his tendency to submit to surrounding influences he could not resist the pressure.

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In "*Œdipe*" and in "*Sertorius*" we can still recognize the painter *par excellence* of moral greatness, but year after year he wore out his talent in romantic fictions, in complicated intrigues, in which we see little of the genius that had given to the world "*Le Cid*" and "*Polyeucte*."

As a writer Corneille was never equaled in his century, not even by Racine. He was not the artist that his



CORNEILLE READING TO LOUIS XIV.

young rival proved himself to be; but, if his style is not always perfect, if he lacks polish, if his critics can point out numerous negligences, some of his alexandrines are models of beauty and strength, and at times the language of his heroes reaches the sublime.

Corneille is the father of the French classical tragedy, and in this domain if he has been equaled at least he has never been surpassed. No greater praise can be be-

stowed on him, if by classics we mean those men who, to use the words of Petit de Julleville, have appeared in the judgment of posterity to be the best qualified to develop in a general way the intellect and the taste of all.

EDOUARD P. BAILLOT.

Northwestern University.

## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

The drama of Corneille deals with what is extraordinary, but in what is extraordinary it seeks for truth. He finds the marvelous in the triumphs of the human will. His great inventive powers were applied to creating situations for the manifestation of heroic energy. History attracted him, because a basis of fact seemed to justify what otherwise could not be accepted as probable. Great personages suited his purpose, because they can deploy their powers on the amplest scale. His characters, men and women, act not through blind, instinctive passion, but with deliberate and intelligent force; they reason, and too often with casuistical subtlety, about their emotions. At length he came to glorify the will apart from its aims and ends, when tending even to crime, or acting, as it were, in the void. He thought much of the principles of his art, and embodied his conclusions in critical dissertations and studies of his own works. He accepted the rule of the unities of place and time (of which at first he was ignorant) as far as his themes permitted, as far as the rules served to concentrate action and secure verisimilitude. His mastery in verse of a masculine eloquence is unsurpassed; his dialogue of rapid statement and swift reply is like a combat with Roman short swords; in memorable single lines he explodes, as it were, a vast charge of latent energy, and effects a clearance for the progress of his action. His

faults, like his virtues, are great; and, though faults and virtues may be travestied both are in reality alike inimitable.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

## II.

Racine was genius enough to make a place for himself, while conforming to these limitations. Corneille had produced his dramatic effects by opposing the passion of love to some general conception of duty, honor, or patriotism. His plays treat these topics subjectively, didactically. They abound in maxims. Their characters are ideal, perhaps. Their heroes often win attention away from the heroines. Racine's method is different. He belongs to another, a new generation, inspired by a different spirit. Instead of being general, his treatment is individual. His themes relate to private life, not public. He is objective, studying humanity around him. He indulges rarely in abstract ideas. If we might apply a modern term to him we might call him realistic. Certainly he stood, as did Molière, in the eyes of his contemporaries, for a close adherence to the plain facts of existence. And in the judgment of the eighteenth century Racine was "natural."

Furthermore he worked from within outward. It is an analysis of character which he aims at, or rather a study of the effects of some passion—almost always love, or its concomitant emotions of jealousy, hatred, revenge, or remorse, rarely ambition or bigotry—on the human heart, with the actions that result from it. The dramatic solution in Racine is obtained by the clash of such passions. In other words, Racine's situations are brought about by his characters, whereas with Corneille it was the situations which produced the characters. And so it happens, whether from the very nature of things or from a fixed purpose, that most of Racine's characters are women. Few of his men can support comparison with them.—F. M. WARREN.

## III.

Corneille's most famous single piece of verse, the splendid declamation of Camille when she learns that her brother has slain her lover, is perhaps unapproached in its kind, or only approached by other pieces of the same author. But Corneille, like every French dramatist, fails when he is compared with our own great playwrights, by reason of the partial and exaggerated view which he gives of human nature, and of his inability to depict the more individual kinds of character. It is probable that these drawbacks are due at least as much to the form of play, which, by his time, was the accepted and almost the only possible one in France, as to his own shortcomings. The ideas of regularity and correctness which had been strongly impressed on French literature, even before his birth, were by this time thoroughly established, and his audience would have been shocked at the free display of action, the complicated story, the abundant characters, which allowed Shakespeare and his great followers to show at once their knowledge of human nature and the resources of their literary art.—  
SAINTSBURY.

## IV.

Racine was emphatically one of those writers—Virgil and Pope are the other chief notable representatives of the class—who, with an incapacity for the finest original strokes of poetry, have an almost unlimited capacity for writing from models, for improving the technical execution of their poems, and for adjusting the conception of their pieces to their powers of rendering. These writers are always impossible without forerunners, and not usually possible without critics of the pedagogic kind. Racine was extraordinarily fortunate in his forerunner, and still more fortunate in his critic. He was able to start with all the advantages which thirty years of work on the part of his rival, Corneille, gave him; and he had for his trainer, Boileau, one of the most capable, if one of the most limited and prejudiced, of literary school-

masters. Boileau was no respecter of persons, and, arrogant as he was, he was rather an admirer of Racine than of Corneille; yet, according to a well-known story, he distinguished between the two by saying that Corneille was a great poet and Racine a very clever man, to whom he himself had taught the knack of easy versification with elaborate rhyming. It is indeed in his versification that both the strength and the weakness of Racine lie, and in this respect he is an exact analogue to the poets mentioned above. He treated the Alexandrine of Corneille exactly as Pope treated the decasyllable of Dryden and as Virgil treated the hexameter of Lucretius. In his hands it acquired smoothness, softness, polish, and mechanical perfections of many kinds, only to suffer at the same time a compensatory monotony which, when the honeyed sweetness of it began to cloy, was soon recognized as a terrible drawback. The extraordinary estimation in which Racine is held by those who abide by the classical tradition in France depends very mainly on the melody of his versification and rhymes, but it does not depend wholly upon this.—SAINTSBURY.

## V.

La Fontaine, it must be admitted, lacked some very essential qualities, while possessing other and unusual ones in notable abundance. Marriage was not sacred to him, though friendship was. He disliked children, though he loved dumb beasts. Throughout the latter half of his life he was dependent on others for a home; but in his soul he was free, and seldom praised his patrons except where self-interest fell in with affection. His tales are an unclean spot upon the century, when French literature as a whole was most pure and dignified; but his fables, which far surpass them in artistic finish, in interest, in variety, are sound and clear and sweet. The truth is, this great man was always a child, with a child's fair purposes and untrained will. Instinct ruled him. Until almost the end of his life he was an irresponsible pagan. . . . He became the greatest





JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

*After the Engraving by Deherve*





lyric poet his country produced in a stretch of two hundred years. La Fontaine is also the epitome and type of whatever is most French. He is the national poet *par excellence*. He represents not so much his age as his race. We recognize in La Fontaine the French intelligence, as it is common to all centuries, and specialized in every individual.—GEORGE MCLEAN HARPER.

## VI.

The history of modern French drama dates from the first performance of "*The Cid*." The theme here selected became the typical one. It shows the struggle between love and honor on the part of the hero, love and duty on the part of the heroine.—F. M. WARREN.

## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM CORNEILLE.

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### *HORACE.\**

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The story of this play is taken from the legend of the battle between the Horatii and the Curiatii. In the reign of Tullus Hostilius, the third King of Rome, there were constant quarrels and plunderings between the Romans and the people of Alba, a town in Latium. Neither side would give way to the other, and war was declared between them. Each party had made active preparations for the struggle; and our play opens as the two armies are ready to be drawn up on the field. There is much lamentation heard both in Alba and in Rome, for the two peoples had long been friends. Marriages had been common between them, and it was felt that great misery and desolation were at hand.

The first two scenes are taken up with complaints and wailings; for whichever side gain the victory, the result will be disastrous to the personages of the story. Sabina, an Alban woman by birth, but married to Horatius, a Roman, thus bitterly laments her fate:

“I am a Roman, alas, because Horatius is Roman; I received the title when I accepted his hand. But this tie would make me a slave indeed, if it shut out from my heart my own country. Alba, where I first saw the light of day—Alba, my first love, the place of my birth—when I see war break out between us and thee, I dread our victory even as I dread our loss. And Rome, if thou upbraidest me that I am treacherous to thy cause, let

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\*For the synopsis of Corneille's great masterpiece presented here we are indebted to the excellent volume on "*Corneille*" by Henry M. Trollope, in the "*Foreign Classics for English Readers*" series. The translations given were, with few exceptions, made by Mr. Trollope. "*Horace*" is a play in five acts, written in rhymed hexameters. The translations, although in the main they are in prose, give a far better idea of the original than most versed translations are able to give.

thy enemies be such as I can hate. When I see from thy walls their army and ours—my husband on this side, and my three brothers on that—how can I without impiety importune heaven for thy happiness?”

Sabina would pray earnestly that Rome might be successful in every quarter of the world, except against her own native town. And, still addressing Rome, she continues:

“Go, push your successes in the East; go to the Rhine, and set your flag up on its banks. Let the columns of Hercules tremble at thy approach; but spare the town where Romulus was born. Recollect, ungrateful city, that thou owest thine own existence, thy walls, and thy first laws to the blood of her kings. Alba is thy origin. Stay, therefore, and consider before thou drive thy sword into thy mother’s breast.”

To whichever side the victory falls, the defeat to her will be terrible. The conquerors will have no further obstacle to their ambition, and the vanquished will be without hope; and as for the unhappy Sabina, she will have only tears for the conquered, and for the conquerors hatred.

When she leaves the stage, Camilla, the sister of Horatius, appears in her place. Julia, a Roman lady, is the confidante of both Sabina and of Camilla, and to her ear the pathetic lamentations on either side are addressed. Camilla, as well as Sabina, is in despair at the thought of the coming war. She, a daughter of Rome, is betrothed to Curiatius, one of the noblest sons of Alba; and her position is identical with that of Sabina, except that she is not yet actually married. Her three brothers are all in the Roman army, fighting against Alba, as the three brothers of Sabina are in the Alban army. Julia tells Camilla that her grief ought not to be so deep as that of Sabina, for she is not as yet married. “One may change one’s lover,” she says, “but not one’s husband. Put Curiatius out of your mind and think of Valerius. You will then have nothing to fear from the enemy. You will be altogether upon our side, and no longer troubled by anxious cares.” The idea of breaking her faith with the man she loves is horrible to Camilla; she will not listen to it for a moment. She has loved Curiatius and had promised herself to him on the day when his sister Sabina was married to Horatius, her brother. The quarrel between Rome and Alba, which had since broken out into open war, had begun after their betrothal. Camilla and her lover had parted, each sore at heart, and she had gone to the oracle to inquire what her fate was to be. The oracle assured her that there would be a change to-morrow in the affairs of Alba and of Rome; that there would soon be peace; that her prayers had been heard; and that she

should be united to Curiatius, so that they should never again be parted. Camilla, still telling her story to her confidante, describes her joy, and how in her joy she had met with her Roman lover Valerius; but moved to ecstasy by the oracle, had scarcely known that it was another, and not Curiatius, who spoke to her of love.

"I met Valerius, and, against his wont, he displeased me not. He spoke to me of love; and I listened to him, not perceiving that it was he who spoke. I showed him neither coldness nor disdain. Curiatius seemed to stand before me. All that I heard told me of his love, and all that I said assured him of mine. But to-day everything hangs upon the hazards of the fight. When yesterday I learnt the news, I scarcely noted it; my heart, charmed with the thoughts of wedlock and of peace, cast off all fatal forebodings. Night has dispelled that sweet delusion; a thousand horrid visions, a thousand images of blood, or rather a thousand heaps of carnage and of slaughter, tore from me my joy and brought back my fears. I saw blood, and the dead, and nothing more; each specter, as it came before me, remained but for a moment. They crowded in one upon the other, and the confusion added a double terror to my dream."

After this description, Curiatius suddenly appears, and speaks to Camilla enigmatically of peace which is to be purchased by an expedient heretofore unthought of. He describes to her how two contending armies had been marched into position facing each other ready for the signal for attack, when the Alban dictator came forward between them, and proposed terms. The dictator described the misery which must follow a war in which members of the same family would be fighting against each other. Their common enemies, he says, are looking with satisfaction at the discord between them. Why should they weaken their forces by a civil war, in which the slaughter of the conquered would only weaken the conquerors? But if they must fight among themselves, let certain champions on each side be chosen, and let the issue be decided by them. The side which is proved to be weakest shall henceforward yield to the strongest. But no indignity shall be imposed; slavery shall not be inflicted; nor shall tribute be exacted. Curiatius tells Camilla that when the dictator had spoken, each party rushed into the other's arms with many signs of joy. It was then determined to select three men from each side. The choice had not yet been made; but in two hours' time the chosen warriors should be prepared to fight.

At the commencement of the second act we learn that Horatius and his two brothers have been chosen on the side of

Rome. Horatius and Curiatius appear on the stage together, and after a scene of mutual compliments, Flavianus, a soldier in the Alban army, comes in to announce that Curiatius and his two brothers have been chosen to fight on the side of Alba. He takes his leave, and the two chosen warriors are again left alone together. Here we have one of the scenes which Corneille loved to describe: the struggle between love and family affection on the one side, and honor and duty on the other. All the three tragedies now under our notice\* contain remarkable instances of this. The situation, however, of the two families here described is almost unequaled in affording scope for all the painful questions involved in such a conflict. There is a moment in which the two champions stand aghast, as if a gulf had suddenly opened between them. Then Curiatius gives vent to the first wild horror of dismay in broken exclamations which finely express the confusion of a mind suddenly overwhelmed by a terrible and unalterable fate. "From this time forth let Heaven, and hell, and earth, unite their rage against us! Let men, gods, demons, and fate herself, combine to do their worst. Their utmost cruelty, their most dread enmity, are less terrible than the honor thus vouchsafed us!"

Horatius is more self-possessed. He reminds his friend that the distinction is one of which they ought to be proud. But Curiatius continues:

"True it is that our names can never die; the opportunity is noble, and we should cherish it. We shall be mirrors of a rare virtue; but yet your heroism has something savage in it; few even of the noblest would wish to seek immortality by such a path. However dear we hold this bubble reputation, obscurity is better than such an honor. As for me, I dare say, and you can testify, that I have never hesitated to follow my duty. Not our friendship, our love, or the ties that bind us, could for a moment make my mind waver. And as Alba shows us by this choice that she holds us in as high esteem as Rome holds you, so shall I fight for her as you for Rome; my heart is as stout as yours. But I still am human. I see that your honor demands of me my blood; I see that mine requires your death. Betrothed to the sister, I must kill the brother; so hard a fate must we encounter for our country's sake. Still, though I fly fearless to accomplish my duty, my heart recoils from it, and I shudder with horror. I mourn my lot, and look with envy on those whom battle has already bereft of life; yet without any wish to draw back. This great and sad honor touches my heart,

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\* "*Le Cid*," "*Horace*," and "*Polyeucte*," Corneille's three greatest plays.

but changes me not. I hold dear what it gives, but mourn for what it takes away. If Rome asks a higher virtue, I thank the gods that I am no Roman, that I am still permitted to feel as a man."

Horatius answers him:

"If you are no Roman show yourself worthy to be one; if you are my equal prove it. The unshrinking courage of which I boast admits no weakness. It is not fit that honor should look behind her as she enters the lists. Great is our misfortune—none can be greater; but I face it, and do not tremble. Let my country send me against whom she will, with joy I blindly accept the post offered to me; the glory of receiving such a trust should stifle all other sentiments. He who, setting out in his country's service, thinks of aught else, is ill prepared to do his duty; this hallowed and sacred law breaks every other tie. Rome has made choice of my arm; that is enough for me. As with full and sincere gladness I married the sister, so do I combat the brother. But enough of futile speech; Alba has chosen you—I know you no more."

*Curatius*—"Alas! I know you still, and this thought it is that kills me; it is your harsh virtue alone that is unknown to me."

This is one of the passages which Voltaire, in his "*Commentaries on Corneille*," extols as worthy of the highest admiration. He says:

"At these words, '*Je ne vous connais plus*'—'*je vous connais encore*,' the audience burst out into applause; nothing so sublime had ever been seen. There is not in Longinus a single instance of equal grandeur. It is lines such as these which have given to Corneille the title of great, not only to distinguish him from his brother, but also from the rest of mankind. A scene such as the above will excuse a thousand faults."

Camilla then enters and Horatius endeavors to embolden her:

"Arm yourself with courage, and prove yourself my sister. If I fall by your lover's hand, receive him not as your brother's murderer, but as a man of honor who has done his duty, who has served his country, and proved himself worthy of you. Fulfill your marriage vows as though I were yet alive. But if it be my sword that cuts short his life, receive me victorious in the same spirit, and do not reproach me for your lover's death."



When Camilla is left alone with her lover she tries to soften his heart, and entreats him to abandon this fearful contest. He has already, she says, done enough for his country. No name is more illustrious than his, and no fresh laurels can add to his glory. If he will remain with her she will not despise him, but will love him the more, because he has been untrue to his country for her sake. The argument is very touching, and brings out the tenderer character of Curiatius, who would fain pretend to be false to his love in order to estrange her if possible from him. But though his heart revolts as much as hers from the terrible strife, not all her entreaties can persuade him to sacrifice his honor by refusing to fight for his country. Alba has committed her fate into his hands, and he must render her an account of his deeds; he must live without reproach, or else die without shame.

This tragic discussion is then varied by the re-entrance of Horatius accompanied by his wife Sabina. "What!" cries Curiatius, "is not Camilla enough to distract my heart? Must you too join your tears to hers, my sister?" But Sabina's despair is beyond tears or entreaties. She has but one wild prayer to make to the combatants. If either one or the other shrank from this glorious misery she would disown them as brother or as husband; the expedient she suggests to make their fight less unnatural is the very utterance of despair. "Buy, by my death, the right to hate each other," she cries. "Alba so wills it, and Rome; they must be obeyed." She is the only link between them. Let one of them kill her, and the other avenge her death. After this there will be nothing strange in their conflict; they will be each other's natural enemies.

Sabina's impassioned appeal brings the terrible situation to its climax; distracted love and misery can go no further. It was probably Corneille's intention in this to contrast with Camilla's entreaties, in which there was a kind of hope, the despair of the wife who saw no issue from the terrible dilemma.

This scene is interrupted by the sudden entrance of the old Horatius. The two heroes had been almost overwhelmed by the appeals of the women. "My wife!" "My sister!" they exclaimed, touched to the heart. "Courage! they are melting," cries poor Camilla; when the father's entrance ends all her hopes.

*The elder Horatius*—"What is this, my sons? Talk you of love? Lose you still your time with women? It is yours to shed your blood, not to think of their tears. Fly! leave them to bewail their miseries. Their complaints have too much power over you, they will make you weak as themselves. Such blows can only be escaped by flight."



The six warriors then prepare themselves for the combat; but as they are standing ready to fight, the people, horrified by the terrible character of the conflict, interpose to prevent it. Tullus Hostilius, the king, appeases their sudden excitement by ordering the champions to lay down their arms until the oracles have been consulted. But this delay only prolongs the sufferings of the unhappy women, through whose hopes and fears the story is here carried on, and who are imprisoned in their house lest they should interrupt the fray.

At length the old Horatius brings them the news that the gods have declined to stay the battle, and that their brothers are at that moment fighting. In the next scene Julia enters to announce that Rome has been beaten. The three Curiatii are yet alive; two of the Horatii have been killed, and the survivor, Sabina's husband, has saved himself by flight. The old Horatius will not at first believe that his son should have turned his back on the enemy. Julia knows nothing further, for her heart failed her when Horatius took flight. The old man does not heed her last sentence, and exclaims: "Did not our soldiers tear him in pieces? Did they admit the coward into their ranks?" Camilla's cry of sorrow here breaks in, and is arrested by the stern despair of the father:

CAMILLA.

"My brothers!"

THE OLD HORATIUS.

"Weep them not, weep them not at all!  
As two have fallen, their sire would proudly fall.  
Let noblest garlands deck their funeral stones,  
The glory of their death for all atones.  
This joy their souls unconquered have possessed,  
That while they lived, Rome was with freedom blessed;  
Ne'er have they seen a foreign prince obeyed,  
Nor their imperial land a province made.  
But weep the other! Weep the fatal stain  
Thrown by his shameful flight upon our fame;  
Weep the dishonor of our house renowned,  
Th' eternal shame on each Horatius bound."

JULIA.

"What would you he had done 'gainst such odds?"

## THE OLD HORATIUS.

“ Die!

Or on sublime despair for aid rely.  
Had he a moment longer held the field,  
A moment less Rome had been forced to yield;  
And honor on my hoary head retained,  
By his life's payment had been nobly gained.  
Yet must he reckon for his blood with Rome;  
Each drop that's spared takes glory from his home;  
Each instant that he lives after this crime,  
Prolongs his shame, and with his infamy mine.  
My hand must stop his course; a father's rage,  
Using 'gainst worthless son the rights of age,  
Must prove, by the prompt vengeance of his shame,  
How such a deed is alien to my name.”

Sabina tries to console her father-in-law, but he will listen to no words of comfort, upbraiding her rather than as her brothers and her husband all live, she has no share in his misery.

The next act begins with Camilla's equally vain intercessions for her brother, when Valerius enters, sent by the king to the old Horatius to express sympathy for his sorrow. The real end of the combat is then for the first time revealed. It becomes gradually evident that Julia had not seen the end of the battle. The old Horatius perceives there is something he does not understand, and when Valerius tells him that he has only heard one-half of the story, he brightens up suddenly and exclaims: “What! Rome is then triumphant?” Valerius then relates to him the complete circumstances of the battle. Horatius was altogether unhurt, though his two brothers were killed; while his three opponents were all wounded. He had fled from them, so that they might not all attack him at once, and had thus been enabled to encounter them single-handed. In this manner he had obtained an easy victory. At hearing this the old man's joy is excessive. Valerius further tells him that Tullus will shortly send his son to him and that the king has determined to celebrate the victory by a festival upon the following day.

When Valerius withdraws, the old Horatius exhorts his daughter to patience. Rome, he says, has gained a great victory, and she ought not to allow her private misfortunes to damp the joy which she should feel at the success of Rome. After such a victory there will be no Roman who would not be proud to win the hand of the sister of the deliverer of their country, and he implores her to show her brother when he returns that they are both of the same blood. But Camilla's misery is not to be vanquished so easily. It is not enough, she

moans, that her lover is killed, and that his rival has brought the news, but she is expected in addition to kiss the hand that has pierced his heart. When Horatius enters with his attendant bearing the swords of the three Curiatii, her misery bursts forth without bounds:

"Restore my Curiatius or leave me to weep; my joy and my sorrow depend on his lot; I adored him living, and I mourn him dead. Think not to find your sister as you left her. You now see in me only an injured woman who will track your steps like a fury, and at every instant reproach you with his death. Tiger, thirsting for blood, that forbidst my tears, and would have me rejoice in his death and sound thy praises to the skies, thus slaying him a second time! May so many misfortunes accompany thy life that thou mayst envy even me."

Horatius, amazed, reproaches her with being unfaithful to Rome, on which Camilla bursts forth into impassioned denunciation of the cruel city: "Rome, where you were born, and which you worship—Rome, which I hate because she honors you!" She prays that all nations from the East and from the West may rise up against her:

"May the anger of Heaven, lighted by my prayers, rain fire upon her. May I see with my own eyes that tempest fall, her houses in ashes, her laurels in dust! See the last Roman at the last gasp, and I, the cause of it, die of pleasure!"

This is more than Horatius can bear. He had that day fought for his country, and he will not suffer his sister to utter such imprecations. He draws his sword, rushes after her as she flies, and kills her behind the scene. The English reader, who has been accustomed to the actual perpetration of horrors on the stage, will remember the precept of Horace (the Roman poet) as translated by Francis:

"Let not Medea with unnatural rage  
Slaughter her mangled infants on the stage."

All such lessons coming down from the classics were as gospel to the French dramatists.

The fifth act brings the tragedy to a climax. Horatius is here put on his defense for the death of his sister. The old Horatius tells his son that though Camilla's fault was great, he was wrong so to punish her. The son answers that his life is in his father's hands, who has full power to take it from him, if it may

so please him. Then the king enters with Valerius on a visit of condolence and inquiry, bewailing the new blow, which he fears the old man will find it hard to bear. Valerius, who has loved Camilla, then stands forth and appeals to the king for the punishment of Horatius. "Who can be safe," he asks, "among the Roman people, who have so many ties with the neighboring nations, if a bride is slain for weeping the death of her bridegroom, because he died in the battle against Rome?" Horatius, however, will not attempt to defend himself. He is willing to die, but prays the king that his death may be an honorable one, that his name shall not be held up to public reproach.

The scene, which has already assumed the solemnity of a trial, acquires a still deeper interest when Sabina enters. Her despair is of a character very different from that of Camilla; and there is a sombre grandeur about her, both in this scene and in the previous one, when she offers her life to her husband and brother. Again her entreaty is that her life may be accepted instead of that of Horatius. What has she to live for? she asks. "Sire, behold my misery and the condition to which I am reduced. What horror to embrace a man whose sword has destroyed my entire race! And what wickedness to hate a husband for having nobly served his country, his people, and you!" After the wife has thus spoken, the old Horatius is heard for his son. Our space does not permit us to reproduce his noble pleading. "How could Romans sacrifice a man without whom Rome had ceased to be Rome?" he asks with pride. The old man's appeal is wonderfully majestic, and the king accepts and adopts his plea. Horatius is pardoned. He has lessened his glory by a crime committed in the very moment of victory; but his offense is more than outweighed by the service he has rendered to his country.

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTIONS FROM LA FONTAINE.

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I. THE OAK AND THE RUSH.\*

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*From "The Fables."*

The Oak said to the Rush (when oaks could talk)—  
"Nature has dealt but hardly with you, friend;  
The wren's light weight sits heavy on your stalk;  
The lightest breeze that for a moment's space  
Ruffles the water's face  
Will make you bend;  
While my grand crest like Caucasus upsoars,  
Baffles the high sun's scorching heat,  
Braves every wind that roars;  
All blasts to you are storms—to me are zephyrs sweet.  
Yet still had you been born  
Within the circle of these branches vast  
Which round my trunk their sheltering shadows cast,  
Your lot had not been so forlorn—  
I should have screened you from the sweeping blast.  
But you are wont to grow  
Down in the marshes low,  
The bleak dominions of the tyrant Wind:  
Nature to you has been indeed unkind."  
Then the Rush spake—  
"Your pity shows a generous heart, 'tis true;  
But pray be not uneasy for my sake;

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\* This fable is said to have been the author's own favorite. The translation is by the Rev. W. Lucas Collins, M.A.

Storms are less dangerous to me than you—  
 I bend, but do not break.  
 You to this hour have held their force in check,  
 Nor ever bowed your neck  
 To any wind that blows—yet wait the end.”  
 As the Rush spoke,  
 Forth o’er the horizon’s verge the tempest broke—  
 The fiercest of his sons the North could send,  
 The Oak bore stoutly up—the Rush bent low.  
 Fiercer and fiercer raged the storm,  
 Nor would its wrath forego,  
 Till all uprooted lay the giant form  
 Whose topmost branch had seemed to touch the sky,  
 Whose roots pierced down to where the dead men lie.”

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## II. THE MILK-WOMAN AND HER PAIL.\*

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*From “The Fables.”*

With milk-pail deftly cushioned on her head,  
 High-kilted petticoat, shoes stout and strong,  
 The good Perrette  
 Fast towards the neighboring town to market sped,  
 Dreaming no ill, lightly she stepped along,  
 Counted the price that she would surely get  
 For that fine pail of milk, and cast about  
 How she should lay it out.  
 First she would buy a hundred eggs, from which  
 Three broods at least would hatch; she should get rich,  
 By care and pains, no doubt.  
 “So very easy it will be,” she thought,  
 “To raise the chickens by my cottage door;  
 And Master Fox—he must be sharp indeed  
 If he don’t leave enough of my fine breed

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\* Probably the best known of all La Fontaine’s fables. The translation is again by the Rev. W. Lucas Collins, M.A.

To buy one pig at least—it may be more.  
 My pig will soon get fat, at no expense—  
 He must be pretty forward when he's bought—  
 And if I sell him fairly, as I ought,  
     My gains will be immense.  
 Then what should hinder me from being able  
     (Things are so cheap just now)  
 To put a cow and calf into my stable?  
 Then, when they join the village herd,  
 How nice to see them skip—my calf and cow!"  
     And, at the word,  
 She gave three skips herself—the milk-pail fell—  
     And so at once farewell  
 To cow and calf, and pig, and chickens that would sell!  
     The mistress of this visionary store  
     Cast one sad glance around  
 To where her ruined fortunes soaked the ground,  
     Then turned and bore  
 Her empty pail back to her husband's door;  
 He would meet all excuses with a curse,  
 And very probably with something worse.

Who does not weave such dreams at fancy's call?

Who does not build his castles in the air?

Picrochole,\* Pyrrhus,† and the milkmaid—all.

Wise men and fools alike, are builders there.

All have our waking dreams, our visions sweet,

Some fond illusion all our souls beguiles;

All that the world can give lies at our feet—

Honors unbounded, beauty's warmest smiles.

In fancy's hour, no man can stand before me;

I dethrone sultans, and I reign instead;

Elected king, my subjects all adore me,

And diadems come raining on my head:

A chance recalls me to myself once more—

And I am poor Tom Noddy, as before.

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\* The ambitious and visionary King of Lerna, to whom his officers promised a long career of chimerical victories.—Rabelais, *Garg.* i, 33.

† When Pyrrhus was planning the conquest of Rome, Sicily, Africa, and Greece, in succession, his minister, Cineas, checked him with the repeated question, "and what next?"



ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM RACINE.

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JEHOIDA AND ABNER.\*

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From "*Athalie* (*Athaliah*)—A Tragedy Founded on Holy Scripture." The Selection is the Opening Scene.

ABNER.

Yea, to the Temple of the Lord I come,  
To worship with the solemn rites of old,  
To celebrate with thee the famous day  
When from the holy mount our Law was giv'n.  
How times are changed! Soon as the sacred trump  
With joyous blast announced this day's return,  
The Temple porticoes, with garlands gay,  
Could not contain the crowds of the devout;  
Before the altar all in order due,  
Bringing the earliest harvest of their fields,  
Offered those first fruits to the Lord of all;  
Nor were there priests enough for sacrifice,

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\* "In his preface to "*Athalie*" Racine has given us the groundwork upon which he has laid his tragedy; it may not be amiss for us to recall the portion of Old Testament history from which his play is taken. Most of us will remember the name of Athaliah. She was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel the king and queen of Israel. She married Joram, the king of Judah; and at the beginning of the tragedy is represented as usurping the throne on the death of her son Ahaziah, who had been killed by Jehu. Joram, and all his sons except Ahaziah, had been slain by the Philistines; and Jehu had exterminated all the posterity of Ahab. When Athaliah heard of the massacre of Ahab's children, she undertook to destroy the whole race of David: and she put to death her own grandchildren—the children of her son Ahaziah. But Jehosheba, the sister of Ahaziah, and the daughter of Joram—but by a different mother—found means to steal away her nephew Joash, one of the sons

A woman's will has dared to check these throngs,  
 And turn'd the day's bright glory into gloom.  
 Scarce dare a few most zealous worshippers  
 Recall for us some shadow of the past;  
 The rest are all forgetful of their God,  
 Or, e'en to Baal's altars flocking now,  
 In shameful orgies learn to bear their part,  
 And curse the Name on which their fathers call'd.  
 My soul is troubled—naught will I conceal—  
 Lest Athaliah visit upon thee  
 Her vengeance, spurn all remnant of respect,  
 And tear thee from the altar of the Lord.

JEHODA.

Whence comes to thee this presage dark to-day?

ABNER.

Holy and righteous, how canst thou escape?  
 Long has she hated that rare constancy  
 Which adds new brilliance to thy mitred brow;  
 Long has she treated thy religious zeal

---

of Ahaziah and grandsons of Athaliah, then an infant in arms, and intrusted him and his nurse to her husband, Jehoida, the high priest, who hid the boy and his nurse in one of the rooms appertaining to the Temple, until the day when he was proclaimed king of Judah. The Bible does not tell us when Joash was proclaimed, and, as some commentators have considered it was on a feast day, Racine thought that the feast of Pentecost was the time most fitting for the events in his play.

"There is something very grand in the opening of this tragedy. We become at once impressed with the dignity and with the religious spirit of Old Testament history. As we read the first few lines aloud to ourselves, we perceive that there is to them a majestic roll of sound, finer, perhaps, and fuller in its tone than anything we find elsewhere in Racine's plays. The scene is laid in the vestibule forming part of the apartment of the high priest in the Temple at Jerusalem; and Abner, one of the chief officers of the kings of Judah, has come there with Jehoida, the high priest, to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, according to the old and solemn custom. Abner laments that the times have become changed, that ancient observances have now fallen into disuse, and that there are only a few who still keep up the pious custom. The people now worship Baal, and they blaspheme the name that had once been so sacred to their fathers. Abner fears, too, that Athaliah has got some secret design against Jehoida. He believes that the queen hates the high priest, because of his strong attachment to God; and that she also hates his wife, Jehosheba, her own step-daughter, the sister of Ahaziah, the late king. And worse still, Mattan, the high priest of Baal—whom Racine has made an apostate priest—is her constant adviser. Jehoida cares neither for Mattan nor for the queen. He has no other fear but that of God. He is determined that Athaliah shall not triumph over him, and he exhorts Abner to remain steadfast in his faith."—*H. M. Trollope, in "Racine," in "Foreign Classics for English Readers" series.*

As obstinate sedition and revolt.  
The shining virtues of thy faithful spouse  
Have earned the special hatred of the Queen.  
If Aaron's priesthood has devolved on thee,  
Thy wife is sister to our latest King.  
Mattan, moreover, that apostate priest,  
His foul desertion from our altar crowns  
With eager persecution of all good,  
And, worse than Athaliah, spurs her on.  
'Tis not enough that in a foreign garb  
The Levite serves at Baal's altar now,  
This Temple is to him a sore offense,  
And he would fain destroy the God he left.  
No means he leaves untried to ruin thee,  
And undermines with praise no less than blame.  
He feigns for thee a treacherous kindness,  
Masking the blackness of his venom thus:  
Sometimes he prompts the Queen to dread thy power,  
And sometimes, looking to her lust for gold,  
Pretends that somewhere, known to thee alone,  
Thou hidest treasures David had amass'd.  
For two days past the proud, imperious Queen  
Has seem'd as though consumed by baffled spite.  
I saw her yesterday with furious eyes  
Glare at this sacred place and mark'd her well,  
As if within the Temple's deep recess  
Lurk'd God's avenger arm'd to punish her.  
The more I think thereon, the less I doubt  
On thee her wrath is ready now to burst,  
And that, with all her mother's thirst for blood,  
E'en in His shrine she will defy our God.

## JEHOIDA.

He who enchains the fury of the waves,  
Knows how to curb the plots of wicked men.  
Submitting humbly to His holy will,  
I fear my God, and know no other fear.  
And yet, I thank thee, Abner, for thy zeal  
That o'er my peril keeps a watchful eye.  
I see injustice chafes thine inmost heart,

Thou art a faithful son of Israel still.  
 For that may Heaven be bless'd! But secret wrath  
 And passive worth, art thou content with these?  
 Is faith sincere, if it declines to act?  
 An impious foreigner for eight long years  
 Has David's throne usurp'd, with all its rights,  
 Unpunish'd waded in our princes' blood,  
 Foul murderess of the children of her son,  
 And e'en against our God has rais'd her arm.  
 And thou, a pillar of this trembling state,  
 Bred in the camp of good Jehoshaphat,  
 Under his son Jehoram in command,  
 On whom alone our towns in terror lean'd  
 When Ahaziah's unexpected death  
 Scatter'd his armies before Jehu's face,  
 Say'st thou—"I fear the Lord and own His truth!"  
 Lo, by my mouth to thee the Lord replies—  
 "What boots it that thou boast zeal for My Law?  
 Thinkest to honor Me by barren vows?  
 What fruit have I of all thy sacrifice?  
 Need I the blood of heifers and of goats?  
 Thy princes' blood cries out, and is not heard.  
 Break, break all compact with impiety,  
 Root up the crimes amidst My people rife,  
 And come and sacrifice *thy* victims then."

ABNER.

What can I do? The people have lost heart,  
 Judah is cow'd, and Benjamin is weak;  
 The day that saw their royal line extinct  
 Extinguish'd all their ancient valor too.  
 The Lord Himself, they say, withdraws from us,  
 Tho' once so jealous of His people's praise;  
 He sees unmoved their majesty abased,  
 And His compassion is at last worn out.  
 No more for us His mighty arm outstretch'd  
 With countless marvels terrifies our foes;  
 His Ark is dumb—utters no oracle.

## JEHOIDA.

Yet when did miracles abound as now?  
When by more signs has God display'd His power?  
Will ye have always eyes that can not see,  
Ungrateful people? Shall His mightiest deeds  
Strike on your ears, nor ever move your hearts?  
Say, my dear Abner, must I needs repeat  
The wonders brought to pass in these our days;  
The signal fall of Israel's tyrant kings,  
And God found faithful to perform His threats;  
Ahab destroy'd, and with his blood defiled  
The plot of land which murder had usurp'd;  
Hard by that fatal field Jezebel slain,  
A Queen down-trampled under horse's hoofs,  
The dogs that lick'd up her inhuman blood,  
The mangled limbs of her dishonor'd corpse;  
The troop of lying prophets brought to shame,  
The fire from Heaven that on the altar fell;  
Elijah's voice ruling the elements,  
The skies thereby shut up, the earth like brass,  
For three whole years left without rain or dew;  
The dead arising at Elisha's word?  
Recall, oh Abner, these portentous signs,  
God is to-day as He has always been,  
He can unfold His glory when He will,  
And ever in His mind His people dwell.

## ABNER.

But where the promises so often made  
To David and to Solomon his son?  
Alas! we hoped that from their fruitful stock  
Kings were to issue in a numerous train;  
That over every nation, tribe, and tongue,  
One of their lineage should extend his sway,  
Should everywhere make war and strife to cease,  
And at his footstool see earth's proudest kings.

## JEHOIDA.

And why distrust the promises of Heaven?

ABNER.

That Son of David, where shall he be found?  
 Can Heav'n itself restore the living sap  
 Of that dry tree now wither'd at the roots?  
 E'en in his cradle Athaliah slew  
 The babe, and eight years after can he live?  
 Ah! might it be her fury miss'd its aim,  
 That of our royal blood some drop escaped—

JEHOIDA.

What wouldst thou do?

ABNER.

Oh happy day for me!  
 How gladly would I go to meet my king!  
 Doubt not that to his feet our eager tribes—  
 But wherefore mock me with these idle dreams?  
 Ill-fated heir of our victorious kings,  
 We had but Ahaziah, with his sons;  
 By Jehu's darts I saw the father slain  
 And thou his sons by his own mother murder'd.

JEHOIDA.

I cannot now explain; but when the sun  
 Shall the third portion of his course complete,  
 Bringing the morning hour that bids to prayer,  
 Hither return and with the self-same zeal.  
 Then God may prove to thee by gracious deeds  
 His work is faithful still, and never fails.  
 So, for this solemn day I must prepare,  
 And dawn already gilds the Temple roof.

ABNER.

What gracious deed is this, to me unknown?  
 Tow'rd thee Jehosheba directs her steps;  
 I leave thee, and will join the faithful band  
 Brought hither by this solemn festival.

## V. THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV.

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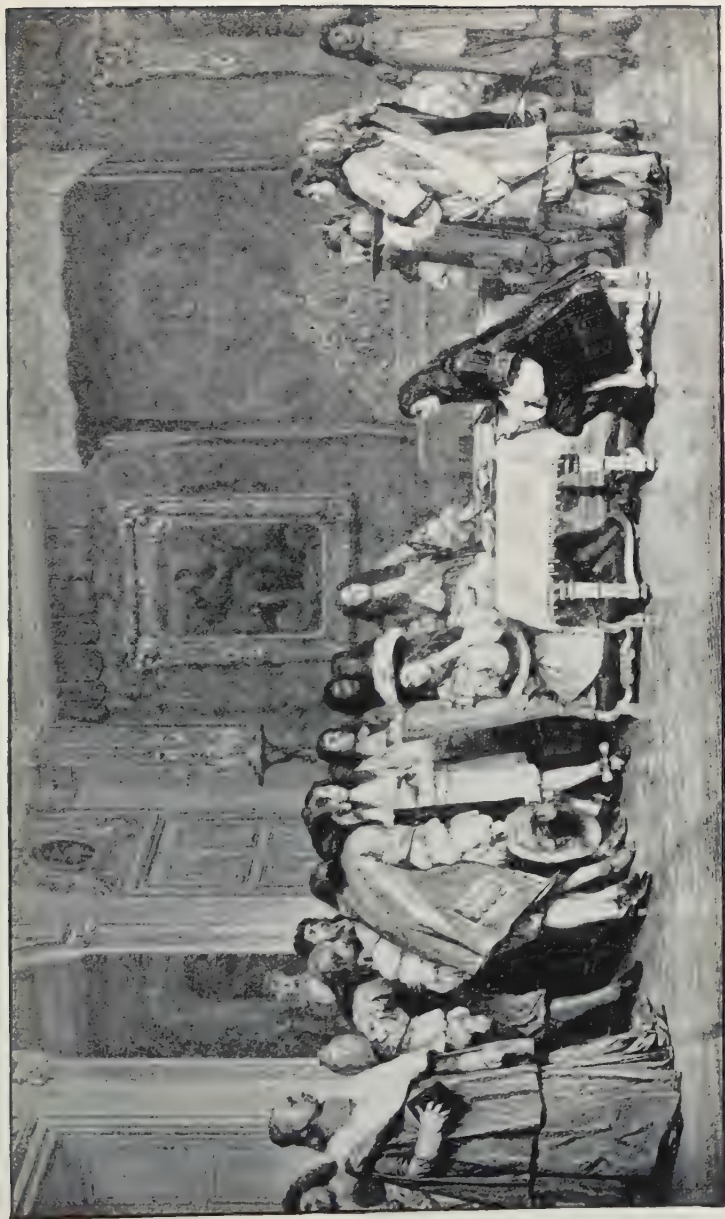
The age of Louis XIV. is frequently described as being the golden age of French literature. But this description is near the truth only when the very early years of that long-reigning king are meant. Louis XIV.'s reign began in 1643 and lasted seventy-two years. But its active period began only in 1661, upon the death of Cardinal Mazarin. The real golden age of French literature, if the age be placed in the seventeenth century at all, was the age of Richelieu, and of the years that followed Richelieu until Louis XIV. began to be the real dominating force of the nation. That age was an age of originality and varied accomplishment and power. It was in that age that Corneille raised the tragic drama to a height it has never since transcended. It was in that age that Descartes and Pascal made their immortal contributions to philosophy and science. It was in that age, too, or but a little later, that *MOLIÈRE*, the greatest of all Frenchmen in the realm of imaginative literature, whose name, indeed, is among the very greatest in the literature of the world, did all his work. *RACINE*, of course, must be taken as wholly a Louis XIV. name. But students of Racine's life know how unfortunate it was for him that it was so; how unfortunate for him and for his art that his mind became so possessed of the value of courtly favor.



The truth is the age of Louis XIV. was characterized by a gradual descent in literary accomplishment and in literary taste from its earliest years to its very end. It could hardly have been otherwise. It was an age of absolute servility to a monarch whose character had only theatrical excellences; an age when religion had ceased to be a spiritual belief and had become a mere acceptance of a king's orthodoxy, and a mere imitation of a king's formalism; an age when captivating oratory among many of those who should have been the moral and religious guides of the people was considered a more excellent gift than moral or religious power; an age when, even in women, tenderness, benevolence, and humanity, were only affected sentiments, not real qualities of the heart.

Herein lies one explanation of the greatness of Molière. His life happened at a time when society, almost in every stage, was characterized by hypocrisy, or affectation, or theatrical pretension. His genius had at hand the very material needed for its supremest efforts. And yet, surpassing as Molière was, his merits were in his own lifetime so little appreciated that in his later days it was only the patronage of the king that kept him from ruin. To the great credit of Louis, he was the patron and protector of Molière to the end. The king was not averse to seeing the faults and foibles of society ridiculed and satirized, so long as his own self-love was spared. But the society over which the king ruled thought and acted differently. When Molière died he was not given even decent burial. To this day his grave is unknown.

The philistinism of the age is also seen in the career of Racine. Racine, whatever his faults may have been, was a consummate artist, and one that deserved contemporary recognition. But when he was thirty-eight years



LOUIS XIV AND MOLIERE

*After the Painting by Gerome*



of age (1677) and in the very height of his power he gave up in disgust his dramatic work for lack of popular appreciation; and though twelve or fourteen years later he wrote two plays, the second one being, in the opinion of critics of to-day, the best he ever wrote, yet this very play met with no appreciation, and was, in fact, in the judgment of the time, a flat failure. Thenceforward Racine was silent. And well he might be.

The great pulpit orators of the age had a different vogue. This was partly because of their intrinsic worth, for among them were some of the ablest intellects of the age. The ecclesiastical profession, owing to the extraordinary honor accorded to it by Louis XIV., who so far as outward observance went was one of the most pious men of his day, was at that time in the very acme of its glory. But the vogue was partly the result of a mere servile imitation on the part of the populace of the taste and fancy of their monarch. But whatever the real cause of its contemporary vogue, the pulpit oratory of the later years of the Louis XIV. period is among the greatest literary triumphs of France. In fact, no country has ever possessed at one time a group of orators, whether profane or sacred, so eloquent or so brilliant, as France in the last half of the reign of Louis XIV. possessed in Bossuet, Fénelon, Bourdaloue, and Massillon.

Of this famous group BOSSUET (1627-1704) was undoubtedly the greatest—the greatest, that is, as a mere orator; Bossuet, however, was not only a great preacher but he was also a great controversialist. But his controversy, though based on a remarkable knowledge of theology, philosophy, history, literature, etc., has not stood the test of time. His magnificent oratorical efforts, however, especially his famous “funeral discourses,”



BOSSUET.



are still read with delight. Indeed, they are among the classics of French literature.

FÉNELON (1661-1715) was intrinsically a much abler man than Bossuet. Indeed, he was one of the very ablest, most learned, and most widely read men of his age. Unlike Bossuet, too, his gifts of character and of heart were remarkable, and had he lived under happier auspices, in a freer, nobler, more virile and natural age, it can scarcely be said what he might not have done or accomplished. In our day he is most remembered for a work that he wrote for a pupil. This is his well-known "*Tele-machus*," a poem in prose, a work of art, all grace and color and rhythmic beauty; a work, too, of noble moral purpose. It need scarcely be said that Fénelon was not a favorite at court.



FÉNELON.

Bossuet and Fénelon were men of wide purview; men of affairs; men that, though ecclesiastics, knew the external life. Bourdaloue and Massillon were men of simpler character, of simpler aims, and simpler lives. Of BOURDALOUE (1632-1704) it was said: "He preached, confessed, consoled, and then he died." He was an olden prophet come back to the world, a voice crying in the wilderness. Of stainless life himself, he sought to

make purity general—a hopeless task in the age in which he lived.

MASSILLON (1663-1742), though equally simple in character and equally single-hearted in his devotion to his calling, was of greater power. “He must increase, but I must decrease,” said Bourdaloue of him when he first heard him. Although the last of the great preachers, yet in the vital elements of the preacher’s art, the power of persuading and convincing men, and changing their hearts and their consciences, Massillon was the greatest of them all. His was also the best finished, the most artistic style. But equally blameless in his life with Bourdaloue, he was equally insistent in enjoining a life of purity upon his hearers. “Other preachers make me content with them,” said Louis XIV.; “Massillon makes me discontented with myself.” Indeed, the great preacher’s sermons became too powerful for his august patron. After a course, during Lent in 1704, of more than usual fervency, Massillon was never asked to preach at court again.



## VI. MOLIÈRE.

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The greatest name in the whole history of French literature is that of Molière. His greatness lies in the fact that he was more than the typical poet of a particular era, even though that era was the classic era of French literature—that he was more than the representative genius of a great nation, even though that nation was France—in that he was one of the three great masters of modern literature whose fame belongs to all times, and to all countries. Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Molière, are the three great creators whose works appeal to all educated persons; whose satire and whose humor is eternal, because it illumines the passions and the weaknesses of all humanity; and whose influence is greater than that of other writers because of their vast and sympathetic knowledge of the thoughts and characters of real men and real women. Not to know the plays of Shakespeare, not to know "*Don Quixote*," not to know the comedies of Molière, is not to be acquainted with the great masterpieces of modern literature.

The barest summary of the facts of Molière's life is all that can be attempted in the present article as an introduction to an examination of his place in the history of French literature. Almost as little is known of his early years, and of the circumstances under which his genius developed, as is known of the early years of Shakespeare. The enthusiasm of generations of schol-

ars has brought out but few biographical facts, and has failed to clear up many mysteries; but, as in the case of Shakespeare, Molière's best monument is to be found in his works.

Jean A. Baptiste Poquelin was the eldest son of Jean Poquelin, a tapissier (upholsterer), who became in 1631 a minor official at the court of King Louis XIII. of France, and of Marie Cressé, his wife. He was born at Paris on January 15, 1622, and received a good education at the Collège de Clermont in that city. On leaving school he probably studied law for a time, and he certainly attended the instruction given by Gassendi in philosophy, when he had among his fellow-pupils Cyrano de Bergerac, whose name and fame have been suddenly revived by the genius of a modern French dramatic writer. About the year 1645 he abandoned his studies for the stage and became an actor, probably because he had fallen in love with an actress named Madeleine Béjart, and he assumed as his *nom de théâtre* the name of Molière, which he was to make immortal. The actor's profession was in the seventeenth century not considered respectable; the days of large salaries and wide publicity had not yet dawned; actors were deemed vagabonds without civil rights or any claims upon the services of the church; and Molière fared no better than the rest of the theatrical company he had joined. These actors were a wandering race, much resembling the circus performers of the present time, and giving performances in booths set up at festival times at the street corners of towns and cities, or in impromptu theaters arranged for them in the palaces of great nobles, who hired them for the amusement of their guests. An admirable account has been given of the bohemian life of these wandering players of the seventeenth century in

Théophile Gautier's celebrated novel "*Le Capitaine Fracasse*." With such a company Molière seems to have wandered throughout France from 1646 to 1658, acquiring doubtless on his travels the knowledge of men and manners which he was later to exhibit in his comedies. He undoubtedly became the playwright of his company, for in those days the dramatist's art had not much advanced, and each company had its poet to write the plays which it presented. A more admirable training in stagecraft can not be imagined, and one reason that the plays of Molière still hold the stage is to be found in the fact that he, like Shakespeare, was himself an actor and knew all the tricks and devices of stage management. It was toward the close of this wandering period that the first of the extant plays of Molière, "*L'Étourdi*," was produced at Lyons in 1653, and the second, "*Le Dépit Amoureux*," at Béziers in 1656.

In 1658 the company of which Molière was manager, playwright, and principal actor, was established in Paris under the name of the "troupe de Monsieur," and performed for the first time before the young king, Louis XIV., upon a stage set up in the guardroom of the royal palace of the Louvre. Its earliest performances, like those which it had given when wandering about France, seem to have been of farces composed by Molière. These farces consisted mainly of rapidly played plots abounding in ludicrous situations, in which the actors made up their own dialogue. But in 1659 Molière produced his first real comedy, "*Les Précieuses Ridicules*," and from that time onward there flowed from his pen and appeared under his stage management for more than fifteen years the long series of comedies which are the glory of French dramatic literature. "*L'École des Femmes*" was produced in 1662, "*Tartuffe*" in 1664,

"*Le Misanthrope*" in 1668, "*L'Avare*" in 1668, "*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*" in 1670, and "*Le Malade Imaginaire*" in 1673. The fertility of Molière during these years was immense, even though it be admitted that he mainly worked up into literary form the plots and ideas of his former wandering life; for he not only produced his long series of comedies, but wrote musical comedies and ballets to be performed at court, and innumerable entertainments, in some of which the king himself took part. It is one of the most creditable features in the character of Louis XIV. that he recognized the genius of Molière, upon whom the "Grand Monarque" bestowed a pension in 1665, when Molière's company became the "troupe du Roi." Molière's success and the king's favor made him many enemies; but even his detractors recognized that he had created a new field in French literature, in which he was himself easily supreme. His private life seems to have been a mixture of triumphs and mortifications; though the king might honor him and seat him at his own table as a man of genius, the courtiers despised him as a vagabond actor; his health suffered from the continuous strain of writing and acting; his marriage in 1662 to a young girl of eighteen, Armande Béjart, the daughter of his former leading lady, did not bring him much happiness; the keenness of his satire made him many personal enemies, and when he died at Paris on February 17, 1673, the church refused, through the archbishop of Paris, to allow its solemn ceremonies to be performed over an actor's corpse.

The work that Molière did in creating the French comic drama should first be noticed. Up to his time, as has been pointed out in the sketch of his life, the drama in France had hardly emerged from the temporary

booth. Companies of actors invented their dialogues as they went along, and sought to amuse by farcical plots and ludicrous scenes. Just as his contemporary, Pierre Corneille, rescued tragedy from its degradation, and replaced the rhodomontades of mouthing actors by the lofty verse which founded the classical French tragedy, so Molière on his side escaped from pure farce and initiated the more delicate comedy.

Three distinct phases can be noted in Molière's development of comedy. His earlier extant works show clearly their origin in the farce, and bear evidence of a knowledge of the contemporary Italian farcical comedies. This group of plays, of which "*L'Étourdi*" may be taken as the type, abounds in adventures of a more or less farcical nature: the comic servant shows wit and ingenuity in getting his master into and out of amorous scrapes and adventures; amusing incidents follow quickly; and Molière only surpassed his predecessors in the greater neatness of his dialogue, and in the more marked and individual character of his young scamps and their friends.

But from farcical comedy Molière advanced to the comedy of manners. Beginning with the "*Précieuses Ridicules*" he satirized the follies of his time. The affectation of language which he laughed at in that famous comedy was based, as he saw truly, upon a deeper and more harmful affectation of spirit; and it was not simply the outward manifestation of insincerity so much as the utter falsity from which it grew that he made ridiculous. The comedy of manners in his hands became as pungent as the lash of the satirist in showing up what was false, and Molière's ridicule of affectation is as effective to-day as it was in the Paris of the seventeenth century, since affectation is eternal. But through the whole

series of the comedies, which are mainly devoted to satirizing and ridiculing follies, there can be seen Molière's kindly knowledge of poor human nature. He perceived as clearly as Cervantes that folly did not always arise from vice; and throughout his mocking laughter appears a real perception of the noble and true qualities which are often obscured by an assumption of foolishness.

In the third group of Molière's comedies he struck a deeper note. In what may be called the philosophical comedies, like "*Tartuffe*," "*Le Misanthrope*," and "*L'Avare*," he dealt no longer with the superficial follies of fashion, but with the deeper passions of human nature. The very word "*Tartuffe*" has become synonymous with hypocrite, and Harpagon in "*L'Avare*" is a more perfect type of miserly avarice than even Balzac's great picture drawn in "*Le Père Goriot*." It is in these philosophical comedies that Molière gives the chief evidence of his genius; his ingenious farces may still rouse laughter, his comedies of manners with their eternal truths may still cause a more or less indulgent smile at the follies depicted, but the philosophical comedies form, like Shakespeare's plays, a series of veritable types of human strength and human weakness. It is with these philosophical comedies that Molière makes good his place in the world's literature with Shakespeare and Cervantes; *Tartuffe* and Harpagon are as immortal as Hamlet and Don Quixote, and the great test of Molière's knowledge of human nature is to be found in his creation of those typical figures which are forever associated with certain forms of human depravity.

Molière was a Frenchman of the seventeenth century, and more particularly a Frenchman of that particular epoch of the seventeenth century which is rightly called



the age of Louis XIV. It has often been remarked that the French are a nation of actors, and that their aptitude for theatrical display marks them out among the modern nations of Europe. The French have likewise a language eminently fitted for use upon the stage, since its words have definite meanings, synonyms are rare, and it lends itself easily to the clear expression of thoughts and emotions. Rhetorical skill in the use of such a weapon as the French language is easier to acquire than in the use of more complex and less lucid tongues; and a degree of verbal nicety and delicacy can be attained which is hardly practicable in any other country. In his power of handling his mother tongue, and in the theatrical aptitude which marks his nation, Molière is an acknowledged master, and in his works can be found in the highest degree the most striking characteristics of the French nation and the French language. But Molière was more than a typical Frenchman; he was a typical Frenchman of the seventeenth century—the most picturesque and theatrical of all the centuries of French history. It was not without reason that Dumas laid the scenes of his most famous novels in the seventeenth century; it is not without reason that the imitators of Dumas, like Stanley Weyman, believe that the great novelist's inspiration arose from the period which he chiefly loved; and at this present time it is worthy of note that the most striking play of the decade, "*Cyrano de Bergerac*," represents France at the period of Molière's youth. France in the seventeenth century rose to the height of its greatness as the leading nation in Europe. A large proportion of its greatest men of affairs, from great kings, like Henry IV. and Louis XIV., and great statesmen, like Richelieu and Colbert, to great soldiers, like Turenne and Condé, and



great sailors, like Duquesne and Jean Bart, flourished in this century; not only Molière, but the other great dramatists of France, Corneille and Racine, the great preachers, Bossuet and Fléchier, the great critic Boileau, the great memoir writers De Retz and Saint-Simon, the greatest of all French letter writers, Madame de Sévigné, and the greatest of all French thinkers, Pascal, added to its glory; and its changing phases, from the closing of the wars of religion, through the administration of Richelieu and the picturesque troubles of the Fronde, to the splendor of the court of Louis XIV., make the century as fascinating as it is variegated. And in this brilliant century Molière stands forth as a typical figure. His career is as full of surprises as the century itself. Born at the time when Richelieu was seizing power for the concentration of the royal authority, his wandering manhood witnessed the troubles of the Fronde, and the varied experiences through which France passed to her undisputed leadership of European politics and European thought left their traces upon the picturesque character of his genius. It was a century of contrasts, a century of duels, and of court intrigues, a century in which an eye for the picturesque and theatrical could best be cultivated. And it was the most important century for the French language likewise—the century in which the Académie Française was founded, and the language became fixed and classical, on passing from the quaintness of the middle ages and the exaggeration of the renaissance. Even the “*précieuses*,” the learned ladies at whom Molière laughed, contributed their quota to the definition of words and phrases; and the very affectation of their stilted style showed an appreciation of the change from looseness to fixedness of usage which was taking place. And, last of all, Molière



MOIÈRE  
(Jean Baptiste Poquelin)

*From an Engraving by Migneret after the Painting by Mignard*



was at the height of his powers essentially a writer of the age of Louis XIV. His period of fertile production was that in which the young king shone forth in all his glory, like the sun which he chose as his device. The great dramatist did not live to see the dark days of the war of Spanish succession, the gloomy and prudish court over which Madame de Maintenon presided, or the expulsion of the noblest of the sons of France—the Huguenots—after the revocation of the edict of Nantes. He only knew the young king at the time of his glory, when the court of Versailles was the most brilliant in Europe and the epitome of all that was most famous and most splendid in France.

Molière, it was said at the commencement of this article, is one of the three great universal figures in modern European literature. He stands out with Shakespeare and Cervantes as the representative of France at its best and greatest, as they are the representatives of England and of Spain. Like them, his greatness rests upon his knowledge and interpretation of human life. Like them, he was essentially the humorist, seeing, with unerring quickness, the absurd side of human life, and the ridiculousness of human endeavor. But, as was the case with them, the very intensity of his appreciation of the humorous made him likewise fully conscious of the pathetic element in human life. Though he rouses the laugh straight from the heart, as do Shakespeare and Cervantes, he is none the less able to draw out the tears that accompany ever the heartiest laughter. Just as Don Quixote is at the same time the most ludicrous and most pathetic of the great creations of literary genius, so, too, is Alceste in "*Le Misanthrope*" a pathetic even more than a humorous character. It is the special gift of the highest of all human genius to see and

to portray human nature as it really is, not all earthly, but not all divine; and it is through his possession of this insight and of the power to reveal themselves to human men and women in all their strength and weakness, their wisdom and their folly, that Molière has earned his place among the world's immortals and in the front rank of the men of genius who have made the literature of France one of the world's noblest possessions.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Of all dramatists, ancient and modern, Molière is perhaps that one who has borne most constantly in mind the theory that the stage is a lay-pulpit, and that its end is not merely amusement, but the reformation of manners by means of amusing spectacles. Occasionally, no doubt, he has pushed this purpose too far and has missed his mark. He has never given us, and perhaps could not have given us, such examples of dramatic poetry of the non-tragic sort as Shakespeare and Calderon have given. Indeed, it seems to be a mistake to call Molière a poet at all, despite his extraordinary creative faculty. He was too positive, too much given to literal transcription of society, too little able to convey the vague suggestion of beauty which, as it can not be too often repeated, is of the essence of poetry. But, if we are content to regard drama as a middle term between poetry and prose, he with the two poets just named must be appointed to the first place in it among modern authors. —SAINTSBURY.

## II.

Ought we to-day to underrate the extent of the services rendered French literature by Louis XIV., rendered almost without an effort, I mean by the sole effect of his example and authority, when it is remembered that he obliged men of letters, by causing them to mix with the courtiers, to rid themselves little by little of a certain middle class self-sufficiency, of a certain rusty pedantry with which they were still besmeared, so to speak; that in this way he secured their admission into the ranks of polite society; and that it is due to him that they acquired, by coming in contact with and frequenting statesmen and men and women of fashion, a number of qualities which are not come by as a rule in the back parlor of a "master upholsterer" or in the household of a clerk of the courts?—FERDINAND BRUNETIÈRE.

## III.

For us who speak English and who hold Shakespeare as a standard by which the men of every other language must be measured, it is impossible not to set the author of "*Hamlet*" over against the author of "*Tartuffe*." In many ways the two men were alike. Dramatists, they were both actors, Shakespeare being probably not prominent in that profession, while Molière certainly excelled all his contemporaries. They were both managers, and both of them were shrewd men of affairs, governing their private fortunes with skill. Legend relates that Shakespeare wrote the "*Merry Wives of Windsor*" on a hint of Queen Elizabeth's, and that Molière augmented the "*Fâcheux*" on a hint of King Louis's. Each of them kept the most of his plays in manuscript while he was alive, and after they were dead the plays of each were published by the pious care of surviving comrades. They were both of them surpassingly original, and yet neither often took the trouble to invent a plot, preferring to adopt this ready made, more or less, and rather

to expend his strength upon the analysis of emotion and the creation of character. Some of these resemblances are merely fortuitous, but some also are strangely significant.

To push the comparison too far would be unfair to Molière, for Shakespeare is the master mind of all literature. He soared to heights and he explored depths and he had a range to which Molière could not pretend. His is the spirit of soul-searching tragedy, of romantic comedy, of dramatic history, and in no one of these is Molière his rival. But in the comedy of real life he is not Molière's rival. In every variety of the comic drama Molière is unequalled—in farce, in the comedy of situation, in the comedy of character, and in the comedy which is almost stiffened into drama, yet without ceasing to be comedy. Shakespeare is the greatest of dramatists, no doubt, but Molière is indubitably the greatest of comic dramatists. In sheer comic force the Frenchman is stronger than the Englishman, or at least more abundant, and also in the compelling power of humor. The influence of Shakespeare upon the comedy of the nineteenth century is almost negligible, for Musset seems to be the only modern poet who has modeled his plays upon "*As You Like It*" and "*Twelfth Night*." The influence of Molière upon the comedy of the nineteenth century is overwhelming, and the author of the "*Demi-Monde*," the authors of the "*Gendre de M. Poirier*," the author of the "*Doll's House*," and the author of the "*Second Mrs. Tanqueray*" are all followers of the author of "*Tartuffe*" and "*Les Femmes Savantes*."

—BRANDER MATTHEWS.



ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM MOLIÈRE.

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THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.

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(LE MÉDECIN MALGRÉ LUI.\*)

ACT I.

(*The stage represents a forest.*)

SCENE I.—SGANARELLE, MARTINE. (They come on the stage quarrelling.)

SGAN.—No, I tell you, I will do nothing of the kind. It is for me to speak and be the master.

MAR.—And I tell you that I will have you live as I please, and that I didn't go and marry you to bear with all your freaks.

SGAN.—Oh! What an awful trouble it is to have a wife! How right Aristotle was when he said that a woman is worse than the devil!

MAR.—Just hear the clever man, with his fool of an Aristotle.

SGAN.—Aye, clever indeed! You go and find me a faggot-maker who can reason like me about everything; who has served for six years a famous doctor, and who in his youth could say the Latin grammar by heart.

MAR.—Plague take the arrant ass!

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\* "*Le Médecin Malgré Lui*" was considered but a farce by Molière, and was brought out as an afterpiece to "*Le Misanthrope*," ("The Misanthrope"). But the piece was so full of fun and so amusing that it obtained the greatest success. Molière himself acted the part of Sganarelle.

SGAN.—Plague take the trollope!

MAR.—Cursed be the day and hour when I took it into my head to say "Yes"!

SGAN.—Cursed be the old idiot who made me sign my ruin!

MAR.—It becomes you well to complain of our marriage! Ought you not to thank Heaven every moment of your life for having me as a wife? And did you deserve, tell me, to marry a woman like me?

SGAN.—True, indeed! You honored me too much, and I had cause to be satisfied on our wedding-day. Ecod! Do not force me to speak of it, or I may say certain things.

MAR.—Well, what is it you'd say?

SGAN.—Enough of that. It is sufficient that I know what I know, and that you were very lucky to have me.

MAR.—What do you mean by my being lucky to have you? A man who reduces me to beggary; a debauched, deceitful villain, who eats up all I possess.

SGAN.—That's a lie; I drink part of it.

MAR.—Who sells, bit by bit, all that we have in the house.

SGAN.—That is what is called living on one's means.

MAR.—Who even sold the bed from under me.

SGAN.—You'll get up all the earlier.

MAR.—In short, who does not leave a single stick of furniture in the house. . . .

SGAN.—We shall move all the more easily.

MAR.—And who does nothing from morning to night but drink and gamble.

SGAN.—That's for fear of the dumps.

MAR.—And what can I do with the children all the time?

SGAN.—Anything you like.

MAR.—I have four little ones on my hands.

SGAN.—Put them down on the ground.

MAR.—They do nothing but ask for bread.

SGAN.—Give them a flogging. When I have eaten and drunk my fill, I wish everybody to live on the fat of the land.

MAR.—And do you think, drunkard, that things can always go on so?

SGAN.—Now, my wife, gently, if you please.

MAR.—That I must endure forever your insolence and excesses?

SGAN.—Do not get in a passion, my dear wife.

MAR.—And that I shall not find the means of bringing you to a sense of your duty?

SGAN.—My dear wife, you know that I am not very patient, and that I have a good strong arm.

MAR.—I don't care for your threats.

SGAN.—My little wife, my darling, your back itches as usual.

MAR.—I will show you that I don't fear you at all.

SGAN.—My dear, dear better-half, you intend to put me in your debt.

MAR.—Do you think that what you can say can frighten me?

SGAN.—Tender object of my desire, I'll box your ears.

MAR.—Drunkard!

SGAN.—I'll beat you.

MAR.—Wine-barrel!

SGAN.—I'll thrash you!

MAR.—Wretch!

SGAN.—I'll give you a dressing.

MAR.—Traitor! Swaggerer! Deceiver! Coward! Scamp! Rascal! Scoundrel! Knave! Cheat! Blackguard! Thief!

SGAN.—So you will have it. (*Takes up a stick and beats his wife.*)

MAR.—(*Screaming*)—Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!

SGAN.—That is the way to make you hold your tongue.

## SCENE II.—MR. ROBERT, SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

ROB.—Hold! Hold! Hold! Fie upon you! What is the meaning of all this? What a shame! The scoundrel, to beat his wife in this way!

MAR.—(*Her arms akimbo, speaks to Mr. Robert, drives him back, and at last gives him a box on the ear.*) And if I wish him to beat me, what then?

ROB.—Oh! I consent with all my heart.

MAR.—What are you meddling with?

ROB.—I am in the wrong.

MAR.—Is it any business of yours?

ROB.—No, it is not; you are quite right.

MAR.—The impertinent fellow, to wish to prevent husbands from beating their wives!

ROB.—I retract.

MAR.—What have you to say to it?

ROB.—Nothing.

MAR.—Have you any right to be poking your nose in here?

ROB.—No.

MAR.—Mind your own business.

ROB.—I have no more to say.

MAR.—I like to be beaten.

ROB.—Very well.

MAR.—You are not the one who feels it.

ROB.—Quite true.

MAR.—And you are a fool to thrust yourself where you are not wanted. (*She gives him another box on the ear; he passes over to Sganarelle, who speaks to him in the same way, and at last strikes him with a stick.*)

ROB.—Neighbor, I beg your pardon with all my heart. Go on and thrash your wife soundly. I will even help you, if you like.

SGAN.—I don't like.

ROB.—Ah! That is another thing.

SGAN.—I will beat her when I choose, and not beat her when I don't choose.

ROB.—Very well.

SGAN.—She is my wife, isn't she, and not yours?

ROB.—There's no doubt about it.

SGAN.—You have no business to order me.

ROB.—I grant it.

SGAN.—I don't want your help.

ROB.—Let it be so.

SGAN.—And you are an impudent fellow to interfere in other people's affairs. Know that Cicero said that we should never put the bark between the finger and the tree? (*He drives him away, comes back to his wife, and takes her hand.*)

### SCENE III.—SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

SGAN.—Come, now, I say, let us make peace. Shake hands.

MAR.—Yes, I should think so, after you have beaten me in that fashion?

SGAN.—It is nothing. Shake hands.

MAR.—No, I won't.

SGAN.—Won't you?

MAR.—No.

SGAN.—My sweet wife!

MAR.—No, I won't.

SGAN.—Come, come, I say.

MAR.—I will do nothing of the kind.

SGAN.—Do, do, do.

MAR.—No; I mean to be angry.

SGAN.—Come; it was only a trifle. Come now, **do**.

MAR.—Leave me alone.

SGAN.—I say, shake hands.

MAR.—You have ill-used me too much.

SGAN.—There, now, I ask you to forgive me, give me your hand.

MAR.—Well, I forgive you; (*aside*) but I'll pay you out for it.

SGAN.—You are a foolish woman to mind it. These are little trifles quite necessary in love from time to time, and five or six strokes of the cudgel only serve to refresh the tenderness folks have for each other. There, I'm going to the wood, and I promise you that you shall have more than a hundred faggots to-day.

#### SCENE IV.—MARTINE (*alone*).

Yes, go. Whatever pretense I may make, I shall not forget my anger; and I long to pay you out for the blows you have given me. I know that it is always in the power of a wife to be revenged on her husband; but that punishment would be too delicate for my old reprobate. I must find a revenge which will sting more, for the other would not pay me for the ill-usage I have had to bear.

#### SCENE V.—VALÈRE, LUCAS, MARTINE.

LUC. (*to Valère, without seeing Martine*).—I'll be blowed if this isn't a pretty job to have took in hand; and I can't see, neither, what I be going to get for it.

VAL. (*without seeing Martine*).—What is to be done, my poor foster-father? We must obey our master; and then you see we are somewhat interested in his daughter's health; for no doubt when her marriage, which has been put off through her illness, takes place, we shall be rewarded. Horace, who is a generous man, has reasons to be concerned about her; and although she has

shown a certain inclination for a young fellow called Léandre, you know that her father will never consent to have him for a son-in-law.

MAR. (*aside, thinking herself alone*).—Can't I think of some plan to revenge myself?

LUC. (*to Valère*).—Whatever fancy has he been and got into his head now since the doctors have all lost their reckoning about what to do?

VAL.—We often find what we want by persisting in looking for it, and that, too, in the most unlikely places.

MAR. (*still thinking herself alone*).—I will revenge myself at any cost. Those blows lie heavy on my stomach, and I can't digest them. (*She says all this thoughtfully to herself; and, not seeing the two men, knocks against them.*) Ah! I beg your pardon, gentlemen; I did not see you; I was puzzling my brains about something which bothers me.

VAL.—We all have our cares in this world, and we also are looking for something we would give much to find.

MAR.—Is it anything in which I can help you?

VAL.—You might, perhaps. We are looking for some clever man, for some skillful doctor, able to bring relief to our master's daughter who has been suddenly deprived of the power of speech through an unaccountable illness. A great many doctors have already exhausted all their science in trying to cure her. Now, people are sometimes found who possess wonderful secrets—special remedies; these often succeed where others have failed. This is what we are looking for.

MAR. (*aside*).—Ah; I've got it. I've just thought of a trick to pay off that ruffian of mine. (*Aloud*) You could not have met with any one more able to direct you than I am. We have close by here the most marvelously clever doctor for anyone whose case is despaired of.

VAL.—Ah! I beseech you, tell us where we can find him?

MAR.—You will find him at this moment in that small wood yonder, amusing himself with chopping wood.

LUC.—A doctor a-chopping wood!

VAL.—You mean that he is looking for herbs?

MAR.—No; he is a most extraordinary man, and likes to do such things; a fantastical, eccentric, cross-grained fellow, and one that you would never at first take for what he really is. He

goes about dressed in an absurd fashion, affects ignorance at times, hides all his knowledge, and avoids nothing so much as putting forth the talents for medicine he has received from Heaven.

VAL.—It is a very strange thing that all great men have their whims; some small grain of madness mixed with their great learning.

MAR.—This doctor's madness is even greater than you can imagine; for, at times, you must even have recourse to blows before you can make him acknowledge his ability; and I warn you that if he once takes this favorite whim of his into his head, you will each have to take a stick and beat him soundly before he will confess what he will have tried to hide from you at first. It is always what we do whenever we have need of him.

VAL.—What an extraordinary whim!

MAR.—So it is; but that once over, you will see him perform wonderful cures.

VAL.—What is his name?

MAR.—His name is Sganarelle. But he is easy enough to recognize. He has a thick, black beard, and wears a ruff, and a yellow and green coat.

LUC.—A coat all yellow and green! Then he must be just fit to doctor parrots?

VAL.—But are you quite sure that he is as clever as you say?

MAR.—Sure? He works miracles! Six months ago there was a woman who had been given up by all the doctors. For six hours they thought her dead, and were just going to put her into a shroud, when they brought to her, in spite of himself, the man we are speaking of. He looked at her, put a little drop of I don't know what into her mouth, and at that very moment she got out of her bed and began to walk about as if she had never been ill at all.

LUC.—Ah!

VAL.—It must have been a drop of potable gold.

MAR.—Perhaps so. Three weeks ago, a child of about twelve years old fell from the top of the steeple into the street and broke its head, arms, and legs, in the fall. They had no sooner brought our man than he began to rub him all over with some ointment which he makes himself, and the child started up at once on its feet and ran out to play.



LUC.—Ah!

VAL.—That man must be master of the universal medicine!

MAR.—Nobody can doubt it.

LUC.—By jingo! That's the man for us. Let's look sharp and fetch him.

VAL.—We are much obliged to you for the service you render us.

MAR.—Only be sure you remember the caution I have given you.

LUC.—My goodness! Let us alone! If leathering is all we've got to do, the goose is cooked.

VAL. (*to Lucas*).—How fortunate we are to meet that woman! I feel buoyed up with the greatest hopes.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, VALÈRE, LUCAS.

SGAN. (*singing behind the stage*).—La, la, la. . . .

VAL.—I hear somebody singing and chopping wood.

SGAN. (*coming on the stage, with a bottle in his hand, without seeing Valère or Lucas*).—La, la, la. . . . So much work deserves a drop. Let us rest. (*He drinks.*) This wood is as salt as the very devil! (*Sings.*)

Sweet to me, my sparkling flask,  
Is thy gurgling voice;  
Nothing more I seek or ask,  
With thee I rejoice.  
Many a one would envy me,  
Wert thou filled forever.  
Ah, my flask, long life to thee!  
May thou empty never!

Blister me, if I don't feel better! One mustn't breed melancholy.

VAL. (*to Lucas*).—That's the man.

LUC. (*to Valère*).—I think you are about right, and that we've dropped straight on to his nose.

VAL.—Let us go nearer.

SGAN. (*hugging his bottle*).—Ah, little rogue! How much I love you, my little darling! (*Sings. On seeing Valère and Lucas, who are examining him, he lowers his voice.*)

Many a one . . . would . . . envy me,  
Wert thou . . .

(*seeing them examining him more narrowly*).—Deuce take it! What can these people be after?

VAL. (*to Lucas*).—I am sure it is the man.

LUC.—There he is to a T, the very man they figured to us.

SGAN. (*puts his bottle on the ground. Valère bows low to him, and Sganarelle thinks he intends to rob him of his bottle; he therefore takes it up, and puts it on the other side. Lucas bows to him in the same way, and he takes up his bottle and holds it close to his breast with different gestures*).—(*Aside*) They are consulting each other and looking at me. What is the matter with them?

VAL.—Sir, your name is Sganarelle, is it not?

SGAN.—What do you say?

VAL.—I ask if your name is Sganarelle?

SGAN. (*turning first toward Valère, then toward Lucas*).—Yes, and no, according to what you want of him.

VAL.—We only want to do him all the good we can.

SGAN.—In that case, it is I who am called Sganarelle.

VAL.—We are delighted to see you, sir. We have been recommended to you for what we want, and we come to ask the help of which we have need.

SGAN.—If it is anything, gentlemen, with which my little trade can supply you, I am at your service.

VAL.—You are too kind, sir. But put on your hat, I beg; the sun might inconvenience you.

LUC.—Clap it on, sir.

SGAN. (*aside*).—How very ceremonious these people are! (*puts on his hat.*)

VAL.—You must not be surprised, sir, that we come to you; clever people are always sought after, and we have been told of your ability.

SGAN.—It is true, sir, that I am the best man in the world for making faggots.

VAL.—Ah! sir. . . .

SGAN.—I spare no trouble, and I make them in a fashion which satisfies everybody.

VAL.—That is not what we came for.

SGAN.—But, then, I sell them ten sous the hundred.

VAL.—Do not mention that, I beg of you.

SGAN.—I assure you that I can not sell them for less.

VAL.—Sir, we know how things stand.

SGAN.—If you know how things stand, you know that I sell them at that price.

VAL.—Sir, you are joking, and——

SGAN.—I am not joking; I can not take a farthing less.

VAL.—Let us speak of something else, I pray.

SGAN.—You can get them cheaper elsewhere. There are faggots and faggots, you know; but for those I make——

VAL.—Ah! sir, leave that subject alone.

SGAN.—O, I assure you that I could not let you have them, were you to offer me only a farthing less.

VAL.—Nonsense! Come!

SGAN.—Upon my word, you'll have to pay that. I speak plainly; I am not a man to overcharge.

VAL.—How sad, sir, to see a person of your position amusing himself with such absurd pretenses—so clever a man as you are, so skillful a doctor, to try and hide himself from the eyes of the world, and to keep hidden the talents he possesses!

SGAN. (*aside*).—He is crazy.

VAL.—I beg of you, sir, not to dissemble with us.

SGAN.—How? What?

LUC.—All this shamming ain't no good. We knows what we're about.

SGAN.—What, then? What do you mean? And whom do you take me for?

VAL.—For what you are—a great doctor.

SGAN.—Get along with you! I'm no doctor, nor ever have been.

VAL. (*aside*).—His fit is coming on. (*Aloud*) Sir, I beg of you, do not hide the truth any longer, and let us avoid all unpleasant extremities.

SGAN.—What extremities?

VAL.—Certain things which we should be sorry to have recourse to.

SGAN.—By jingo! You may have recourse to all you please; I'm not a doctor, and don't understand what you mean.

VAL. (*aside*).—I see that we must make use of the remedy. (*Aloud*) Sir, I pray you once more to confess plainly what you are.

LUC.—Bother! Don't beat so about the bush no more; speak up, and say that you are a doctor.

SGAN (*aside*).—How mad I feel!

VAL.—What is the use of denying what is known?

LUC.—Why all these whims and fancies? Of what use is it all to you?

SGAN.—Gentlemen, one word is as good as a thousand. I tell you that I am not a doctor.

VAL.—You are not a doctor?

SGAN.—No.

LUC.—You ain't a doctor?

SGAN.—No, I tell you.

VAL.—Since you will have it, it must be so. (*They each take a stick and beat him.*)

SGAN.—Oh! oh! oh! Gentlemen, I am anything you please.

VAL.—Why do you force us to use such violence, sir?

LUC.—Why give us the trouble of bating you?

VAL.—I assure you that I am exceedingly sorry for it.

LUC.—And so am I, 'pon my word, uncommonly.

SGAN.—What the deuce are you at, sirs? Tell me, pray, is it a joke, or are you both crazy, that you both persist in calling me a doctor.

VAL.—What! You have not made up your mind yet, and you still persist in denying that you are a doctor!

SGAN.—Devil take me if I am!

LUC.—It ain't true that you are a doctor?

SGAN.—No; choke me if I am. (*They beat him again.*) Oh! oh! Gentlemen! Yes, since you wish it, I am a doctor, I am a doctor; an apothecary, also, if you have a mind to it. I'd rather consent to anything than to have my brains knocked out.

VAL.—Ah! All right, sir; I am delighted to see you come back to reason.

LUC.—It makes me quite happy like to hear you speak like that.

VAL.—I sincerely beg of you to forgive me.

LUC.—Pray excuse the liberty we've took.

SGAN. (*aside*).—H'm! It is I who am deceived, and have I not become a doctor without knowing it?

VAL.—You will have no cause to repent, sir, of having told us the truth; and you will be sure to be satisfied.

SGAN.—But, gentlemen, tell me, are you not deceiving yourselves? Is it quite certain that I am a doctor?

LUC.—Yes, that you are, and no mistake, neither.

SGAN.—Really?

VAL.—Undoubtedly.

SGAN.—Deuce take me, if I knew it.

VAL.—How! You are the most clever doctor in the world.

SGAN.—Ah! ah!

LUC.—A doctor what has cured I don't know how many diseases.

SGAN.—Bless me!

VAL.—A woman was thought to be dead for six hours; they were going to put her in a shroud, when, with a drop of something, you brought her back to life again and made her at once walk about the room.

SGAN.—A plague I did!

LUC.—A child twelve years old had fallen from the top of a steeple and broken his head, legs, and arms. You, with I don't know what ointment, made him jump on his feet, and he went to play at pitch-farthing.

SGAN.—The deuce I did!

VAL.—In short, sir, you will be satisfied with us; and you will gain all the money you like by coming with us where we want to take you.

SGAN.—I shall gain all the money I like?

VAL.—Yes.

SGAN.—Ah! I am a doctor most certainly. I had forgotten all about it, but I remember it now. What is there to be done? Where must I go?

VAL.—We will go with you. We want you to come and see a young lady who has lost her speech.

SGAN.—Faith! I have not found it.

VAL. (*aside to Lucas*).—He likes a joke. (*Aloud*) Now, sir!

SGAN.—Without a doctor's gown?

VAL.—We'll find you one.

SGAN. (*giving his bottle to Valère*).—Hold this, you; it is in this I put my julep (*then turning toward Lucas, and spitting on the ground*). You put your foot upon this, by the doctor's order.

LUC.—This doctor just suits me, and no mistake; he's safe to get on, 'cause he's a bit of a larker.

(*End of Act I. There are three acts in the piece.*)

## VII. PERIOD OF DOUBT AND CRITICISM.

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Never, perhaps, in the history of the world was the principle of social development that national life moves as a whole, dominated by the spirit of its own age, more forcibly illustrated than in the history of France during the second and third quarters of the eighteenth century. The dominating spirit in French thought during that epoch was a spirit of doubt, of investigation, of criticism. It was not a constructive age, although, as we shall see in a subsequent lesson, it was an age of abundant theorizing. But it was an age when, as never before, the opinions, the beliefs, the fundamental conceptions of society, were put to the test of examination and trial.

There were good reasons for this. The fundamental conceptions of society have to do with religion, and, in the age we are treating of, the religious instincts of the people were subjected to some rude awakenings. The age of Louis XIV. had been an age of absolutism on the one hand, and of quiet acquiescence, if not of servile submission, on the other. "Great subjects are forbidden us," said La Bruyère, one of the shrewdest and cleverest thinkers of the middle part of the Louis XIV. epoch; and it was worse as the epoch approached its end. The king in his old age was scrupulously religious. The obsequious society of the day found its interest in imitating him in this, as in everything else. As a consequence, in the opening

years of the century, the church exercised an influence that was not only respectable, but in many respects salutary. But when the remarkable group of pulpit orators that had won for the church, despite its general faithlessness, this respectable and salutary influence, passed away, the inevitable reaction set in. And when Louis himself passed away (1715) the reaction became general. France, without real religion, without social cohesion, without the energizing influences of popular education, without vital strength in her government, festering with corruption in her public administration, burdened with debt, and, above all, shorn of that glory of European leadership which so long had dazzled the eyes of her people and made them blind to her real character, went staggering forward to her ruin, like a ship without captain or crew, without chart or compass, without rudder or ballast. In the end the ship was saved, and its precious freight—a high-spirited, intrinsically noble and acutely intelligent people—saved also; but not without tremendous suffering and loss.

The leading minds in this period of national driftage were three: Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Diderot. There were others, as we shall see later on, but these were the three greatest. VOLTAIRE (1694-1778), perhaps more than anyone else, was the characteristic representative of the age. Without definite aims, having no fixed ideas of life or conduct or government or policy, but quick to see where misery and suffering were, where wrong and injustice prevailed, where hypocrisy or persecution held sway, however veiled, he infused into all his writings, embracing every department of literature, a spirit of criticism and attack upon the social and political and religious institutions of his time, especially the church, which made him, so far as immediate personal influence and authority went, the most powerful per-





DIDEROT.

sonage of his age. The church, it must be said, merited most of the criticism it received, for it had now lost both faith and character; while as regards oppression of the people it far outran the government.

But Voltaire, despite the brilliancy of his ridicule, his satire and his invective, despite, too, the commanding position that he held as the greatest literary man of his time, must give place in power of thought, and in real influence upon the opinions of his age, to those two other great

thinkers and writers whom we have named with him, Montesquieu and Diderot.



MONTESQUIEU.

The genius of MONTESQUIEU was so different from that of Voltaire that at first thought it might seem wrong to associate them. Montesquieu was a real philosopher. He possessed the gift of patient research. He based his views and criticisms not upon impressions, but upon ascertained facts.

He always had a definite end in view. He did not seek to break down and destroy (Voltaire's famous watchword was: "Crush the infamous thing!"\*), but to modify and amend. He looked upon social and political institutions in the light which vast study and a wide purview afforded him. His great works were "*The Greatness and Decadence of the Romans*" and "*Laws*" ("*Esprit des Lois*"), works in which he was the first to apply to the needs and conditions of contemporary time deductions derived from the study of history and of the growth and development of social and political institutions in all ages. It is unquestionable that Montesquieu had the greatest

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\* "*Écrasez l'Infâme.*"

possible influence upon his contemporaries. In less than two years from its publication the "*Esprit des Lois*" had passed through twenty-two editions and had been translated into many languages. France in the eighteenth century was destined to suffer fearful throes in its effort to give birth to liberty, justice, and popular government. That it was able to give birth to these things at all, that it was able even to conceive these things, was due in great measure to the sane and well-reasoned teachings of Montesquieu.

The influence of Montesquieu was in the field of government. The influence of Diderot was in the fields of science, philosophy, and metaphysical speculation. DIDEROT (1713-1784) was one of the most remarkable men ever born to France. His great work was the famous "*Encyclopedia*," of which he was the editor—published



D'ALEMBERT.

amid incredible difficulties, owing to the opposition of the Jesuits and other causes, in the years 1751 to 1772. Associated with Diderot in the preparation of the "*Encyclopedia*" were many of the principal writers of the day, including Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, D'Alembert, Buffon, and Turgot. But the work was peculiarly Diderot's own, in that his spirit pervaded the whole. The "*Encyclopedia*" was intended to be a complete presentation of the science, the philosophy, the liberal arts, the mechanical arts, the social and political institutions of the time. And although it was very unequal in its execution

(Voltaire said that it was built half of marble, half of wood), it was, in fact, the most notable attempt to systematize the positive knowledge of the world (outside of biography and history) that the world had yet seen. And its influence was commensurate with its ability. It is safe to say that that spirit of scientific inquiry which for the last century and a quarter has been ever increasingly the characteristic feature of the thought of the world derives no small share of its impulse from Diderot's great work. But so far as its influence in its own day was concerned, the "*Encyclopedia*" is remarkable chiefly from the fact that it was from it that the anti-spiritual and materialistic ideas, so characteristic of the age subsequent to its publication, mainly derived their origin. Without setting out to be polemical or destructive in its aim, it became from the very positiveness of its premises, from the very logicalness of its reasoning, an engine against speculation or faith of any sort not founded on demonstrable certitude. It acknowledged no facts outside of matter and ascertainable phenomena, no methods outside of human reasoning. It was, in fact, the first great application of the positions of modern materialism and modern rationalism to the intellectual conclusions, the doctrines, the institutions, of man and of society.

## VIII. VOLTAIRE.

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What, then, shall we think of Voltaire? He was at least not an atheist. He acknowledged the being and affirmed the holiness of God. The gravamen of the charge against him is that he did evil that good might come; that he aimed at religious reform by irreligious means and in an irreligious spirit; in a word, that he was not merely a skeptic, but that he was a scoffer. Rightly or wrongly, this seems to be the prevalent view, and to most Englishmen and Americans Voltaire is a synonym for ribald blasphemy.

That he was eminent as a poet, a dramatist, a novelist, and a historian, is disregarded by those who shudder at him as the man of sin, the high priest of impiety, the especial enemy of the church, the very anti-Christ of modern days. There is, of course, a smaller but not uninfluential class that crown him with honor as a scientist and philosopher, a pioneer of popular education, a champion of religious liberty, an enlightened, courageous friend of man, an illustrious and immortal benefactor.

Voltaire lived in France and in the eighteenth century, and it is as a Frenchman of the eighteenth century that he must be judged. That great movement in favor of civil and religious liberty which Protestants call the Reformation, had succeeded in north Germany and in England, but had been overpowered in France. A stationary church as-



VOLTAIRE.



serted its authority against a progressive society. It was dangerous to oppose the church openly; and so would-be reformers were driven into the use of indirect methods, into the use of anonymous publications, of satire and of innuendo. These methods were congenial to Voltaire's nature, and in them he became the greatest master that ever lived. Macaulay says: "Of all the intellectual weapons which have ever been wielded by man the most terrible was the mockery of Voltaire." He compares the shafts of Voltaire's ridicule to the arrows of Death himself.

It was the church—this ancient and imposing institution, supported by all the strength of an absolute monarchy and imperious courts—that Voltaire determined to overthrow. His purpose called for the death-conquering spirit of an apostle and martyr, or for the most consummate adroitness. Voltaire's temperament and education led him to choose the latter alternative. It is said that when as a young man he had shown a somewhat reckless spirit of reform his father pointed to a figure of Christ on the cross and said significantly: "That is the fate of reformers." Voltaire took the hint. Carlyle says of him: "No testimony will he seal with his blood; scarcely any will he so much as sign with ink." His publications were largely anonymous, and when they were not so any heterodox opinions were advanced on the authority of writers of other ages. They were stated in the most plausible and impressive manner, and then weakly and perfunctorily refuted or simply denounced as heresies in ironical deference to the authority of the church.

The style of Voltaire is very much like the style of Addison, but the use that each of these brilliant men made of his wit was very different. Addison was a steady upholder of the Christian religion and the Christian church. Voltaire was a bitter opponent of both. He used all his

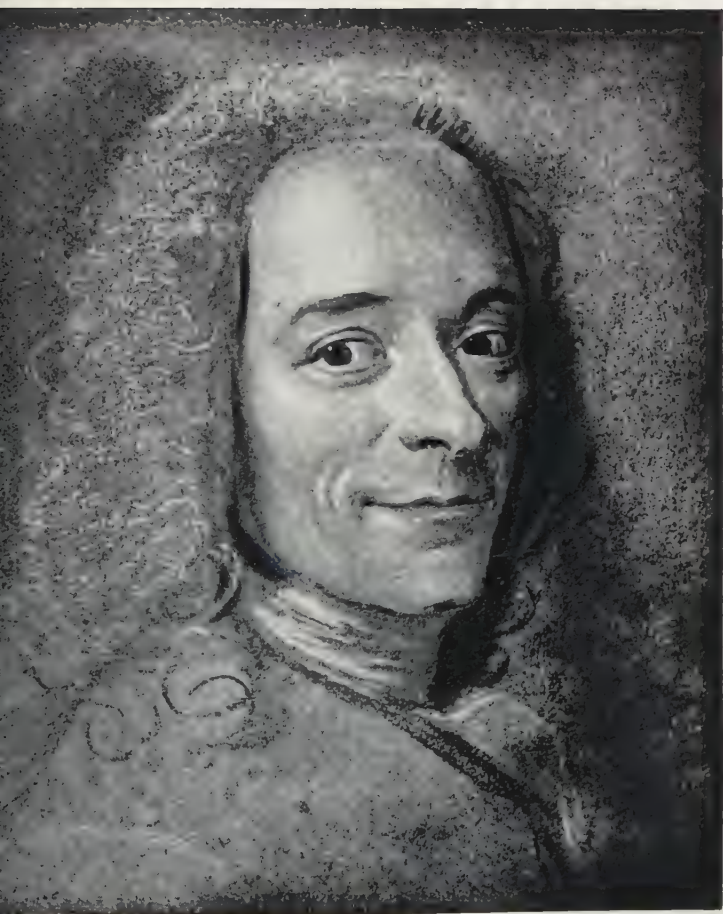


wonderful resources of wit, epigram, insinuation, and allegory, as freely against the Bible and the church as against other objects of his dislike. He poured his vitriolic scorn on many an ancient error and on many a modern abuse, but he also burned with it many a beautiful and sacred symbol that a larger and more reverent mind would have held in the deepest respect. He made many a hypocrite writhe beneath the lash of his sarcasm, but he gave bitter pain to many a pure and devout heart by travesties of Christian history and by aspersions of the character and motives of saints and martyrs, of prophets and apostles. He did not even spare the central figure of Christian history. He had the audacity not merely to deny the Deity, but to impugn the character, of Jesus. This is an intellectual and moral depravity rare even among skeptics. Catholic and Protestant, deist and agnostic, all alike bow before the matchless purity and sublimity of Christ. While they use the words: "Son of God" in different senses, they agree in calling Him the "Son of Man," the man of men, the supreme glory of human nature. But Voltaire did not see this. He was strangely blind to the nobility of Him whom all else honor.

Voltaire did not distinguish between accidents and essentials, between truth and its perversions, between the virtue of the founder and the mistakes and sins of the followers. He was shortsighted and the mists of prejudice hid from him the sun of righteousness.

But making all possible allowances for Voltaire's surroundings, the deformities of his character are so great that it is hard to give him due credit, either for his better qualities or for the services he undoubtedly rendered to France and to the world.

Voltaire's labors in promoting a knowledge of the physical sciences were long, arduous, and disinterested. His



VOLTAIRE  
(François Marie Arouet)

*After a Crayon Sketch by La Tour in the Eudoxe Marcille collection*



"*Elements of the Newtonian Philosophy*" was the first book upon the subject to be published in France. He wrote hundreds of gratuitous articles for the famous French encyclopedia, the pioneer of popular education. He was profuse in his charitable gifts, and his home was a refuge for the needy. More than this, he gave much time, money, and toil, and exposed himself to obloquy and danger, in defending the victims of oppression. The defamer of Joan of Arc was the savior of the family of Calas. His exposures in this shameful case led to an outcry that abolished the rack and confession by torture. Voltaire died in 1778, but his influence lived on, and his protests against tyranny and superstition were among the most powerful causes of that great revolution which made France a democracy, which weakened the power of every European despotism, and lightened the burdens of every people. The ideas of 1789, the words "*liberty*," "*equality*," and "*fraternity*," in spite of the mistakes and crimes of their apostles, have not lost their power, and will have their influence in bringing in the better social and political conditions for which we are all hoping.

The skeptic has a function, and a very important one it is. It is to counteract the hypocrite and the fanatic. The infidel and the bigot are the extreme types of divergence in the human mind, and, mischievous and repulsive as they are, they nevertheless illustrate, even better than more moderate types, certain great fundamental laws. The physical, the political, and the religious world, alike depend upon a certain equilibrium of forces. The earth revolves about the sun as a result of the balance between the centripetal and centrifugal motions. If the centripetal force were unchecked the earth would plunge into the sun and be instantly dissolved into its elements. If the centrifugal force were given full sway our globe would dash off into

space and become a wandering star from which all life would speedily perish. The removal of dead tissue is as necessary to the health and growth of the human body as food itself. The body politic is not unlike. A good government is always the result of the interaction of forces that upbuild and forces that disintegrate. Where centralizing forces are too strong the result is despotism. Where individuality is too great the result is anarchy. God made acids to cleanse away rusts and stains. He made jackals and vultures to devour garbage.

Taking, then, the darkest view of Voltaire compatible with faith in an overruling Providence, we may perhaps accept his own estimate of himself as expressed in the words: "*J'ai fait un peu de bien; c'est mon meilleur ouvrage*" ("I have done a little good; it is my better work").

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Voltaire, whose real name was François Marie Arouet, is certainly the most influential of the numerous writers that have been produced by France. He was born in Paris on November 21, 1694, and died in the same city on May 30, 1778. At the time of his birth Louis XIV. was still the absolute ruler of France; no one dared to question his divine right to the crown or to resist his clearly expressed will. When he died public opinion had become so irresistible a power that King Louis XVI. had been compelled, much against his desire, to assist the revolted colonies of North America in their struggle against the English king, and that eleven years later the French also determined

to begin a revolution, the object of which was to establish free and equal government over the ruins of the old system. Of the transformation which had taken place between the dates of 1694 and 1778 Voltaire had been the chief artisan.

As a writer it is somewhat difficult to-day to assign to Voltaire his exact rank. He was primarily a man of action. He wrote with a purpose. He wished to effect a transformation of the public mind, and the high value of what he wrote, its adaptation to the end he had in view, is shown by the results which were achieved by him. His greatest gifts were clearness of statement and vividness of illustration. His many-sidedness has never been surpassed. It must be recognized, however, that he succeeded in prose work better than in verse.

No one who wishes to know Voltaire should fail to acquaint himself with his correspondence. As a letter writer he is unsurpassed, and his correspondence covers a period of over sixty years, of the most interesting in the history of mankind. We possess over ten thousand letters written either by or to him, and this represents, very likely, only a small part of the epistolary activity of this extraordinary man.—ADOLPHE COHN.

## II.

It would not be easy to give a clearer idea of the strange conception of poetry which prevailed in France at this time than is given in the simple statement that Voltaire was acknowledged to be its greatest poet. It is probable that few Englishmen think of Voltaire as a poet at all, and he has indeed no claim to the title except such as may be derived from his remarkable skill in the mechanism of the art of poetry, and from the extraordinary felicity of his light occasional pieces. It is, however, as a poet that he was chiefly regarded by his contemporaries.—SAINTSBURY.

## III.

Filled with destructive passion against the church, Voltaire in affairs of the state was a conservative. His ideal for France was an intelligent despotism. But if a conservative, he was one of a reforming spirit. He pleaded for freedom in the internal trade of province with province; for legal and administrative uniformity throughout the whole country; for a reform of the magistracy; for a milder code of criminal jurisprudence; for attention to public hygiene. His programme was not ambitious, but it was reasonable, and his efforts for the general welfare have been justified by time.

As a literary critic he was again conservative. He belonged to the classical school, and to its least liberal section. He regarded literary forms as imposed from without on the content of poetry, not as growing from within; passion and imagination he would reduce to the strict bounds of uninspired good sense; he placed Virgil above Homer, and preferred French tragedy to that of ancient Greece; from his involuntary admiration of Shakespeare he recoiled in alarm; if he admired Corneille it was with many reservations. Yet his taste was less narrow than that of some of his contemporaries; he had a true feeling for the genius of the French language.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

## IV.

The maturity of the eighteenth century is found in Voltaire; he was the personification of its rashness, its zeal, its derision, its ardor, and its universality. In him nature had, so to speak, identified the individual with the nation, bestowing on him a character in the highest degree elastic, having lively sensibility but no depth of passion, little system of principle or conduct, but that promptitude of self-direction which supplies its place, a quickness of perception amounting almost to intuition, and an unexampled degree of activity by which he was in some sort many men at



once. No writer, even in the eighteenth century, knew so many things or treated so many subjects. That which was the ruin of some minds was the strength of his. Rich in diversified talent and in the gifts of fortune, he proceeded to the conquest of his age with the combined power of the highest endowments under the most favorable circumstances. He was driven again and again, as a moral pest, from the capital of France by the powers that fain would have preserved the people from his opinions, yet ever gaining ground, his wit always welcome, and his opinions gradually prevailing, one audacious sentiment after another broached and branded with infamy, yet secretly entertained, till the futile struggle was at length given up and the nation, as with one voice, avowed itself his disciple.

It has been said that Voltaire showed symptoms of infidelity from infancy. When at college he gave way to sallies of wit, mirth, and profanity, which astonished his companions and terrified his preceptors. He was twice imprisoned in the Bastile, and many times obliged to fly from the country. In England he became acquainted with Bolingbroke and all the most distinguished men of the time, and in the school of English philosophy he learned to use argument, as well as ridicule, in his war with religion. In 1740 we find him assisting Frederick the Great to get up a refutation of Machiavelli; again, he is appointed historiographer of France, gentleman of the bed-chamber, and member of the Academy; then he accepts an invitation to reside in the court of Prussia, where he soon quarrels with the king. After many vicissitudes he finally purchased the estate of Ferney, near the lake of Geneva, where he resided during the rest of his days. From this retreat he poured out an exhaustless variety of books, which were extensively circulated and eagerly perused. He was the admiration of all the wits and philosophers of Europe, and numbered among his pupils and correspondents some of the greatest sovereigns of the age. At the age of eighty-four he again visited Paris. Here his levees were more crowded than those of any emperor; princes and peers thronged his antechamber; and when he rode through the streets a train attended him which stretched far over the

city. He was made president of the Academy, and crowned with laurel at the theater, where his bust was placed on the stage and adorned with palms and garlands. He died soon after, without the rites of the church, and was interred secretly at a Benedictine abbey.—BOTTA.

## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM VOLTAIRE.

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### ZADIG.\*

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Much as they appreciated their rural home Madame du Châtelet and Voltaire† did not object to leave it occasionally for a visit to Paris, where the lady plunged into amusements and dissipations with as much ardor as if Newton and geometry were idle words. In the year 1749 they were at Fontainebleau, guests of the Duke of Richelieu, and playing high at the queen's table. A run of luck, or perhaps worse, set in against Madame du Châtelet, who, on the second night, was a loser of between three and four thousand pounds. Voltaire, disturbed at so considerable a loss, whispered to her in English that her absorption in the game prevented her from seeing that she was playing with sharpers. The words were overheard and repeated; and perceiving this, and knowing how serious might be the consequences, they slipped quietly away, and at once, in the middle of the night, set out for Paris. On the road a wheel broke—a common occurrence of the time, and one in which the wheels probably were less in fault than the roads. Voltaire sent a peasant to Sceaux with a letter, begging an asylum from his old friend the Duchesse du Maine, now stricken in years. He was welcomed at once, was admitted with all due secrecy by a discreet steward, placed in a very private set of apartments, and waited on by a trusty valet, none else of the household knowing of his presence. At night, after the duchess had gone to bed, and all the servants had withdrawn, Voltaire used to descend

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\* The introductory and other notes, and also the translations from the passages from "*Zadig*," here given are abridged from Sir Edward Hamley's "*Voltaire*," in the excellent, "*Foreign Classics for English Readers*" series.

† From 1734 to 1749 Voltaire resided with the Marquise du Châtelet at Cirey in Lorraine. The marquise was twelve years younger than Voltaire. Voltaire says of her that "she was the woman most disposed to study the sciences of any in France." She knew Latin, and "she had by heart all the choice passages of Horace, Virgil, and Lucretius." "All the philosophical works of Cicero were familiar to her. But of all studies she preferred mathematics and metaphysics."

by a secret stair to her chamber (bedchambers were places of comparatively public resort in those days); the confidential valet laid out his supper-table at the bedside; and the duchess, who greatly delighted in his conversation, talked over old times with him. After supper he sometimes read to her a tale, composed during the day expressly for her amusement. The "*Arabian Nights' Entertainments*," introduced into France by Gallaud many years before, had rendered Oriental romance popular. Voltaire had seen how English writers had made it the convenient vehicle of a moral lesson, as in Addison's "*Vision of Mirza*;" he now extended its use, in those light and sparkling romances, which are the most enduringly popular of his works. "*Babouc*," "*Memnon*," "*Scarmentado*," "*Micromegas*," and best of all, "*Zadig*," first saw the light at the delighted old princess's bedside.

While he was thus occupied, the marquise was endeavoring to pay her play debt, and to soothe the resentment of the illustrious players, by some of whom diligent inquiry had been made for Voltaire, who was believed to have taken refuge in Berlin. At length, Madame du Châtelet came to Sceaux, to join a brilliant company assembled there. It was the custom to hold readings in the drawing-room before dinner. The duchess wished the company to share the pleasure which she had felt in hearing the little romances. Voltaire, one of the finest of readers, complied; they were found altogether delightful, and he was made to promise that they should be printed; and, accordingly, "*Zadig*" appeared soon afterward.

Nothing was ever recounted more lightly and gracefully than the narrative by which *Zadig* is conducted through his adventures. These are altogether of the Oriental type, such as the "*Arabian Nights*" has made familiar to us—prodigious occurrences, discoveries, and meetings that take place just at the right time; surprising ups and downs of fortune, penury and prodigality treading on one another's heels; the extreme of luxury prevailing at one moment, the most abject misery in the next. But while the gorgeous fancies of the East trust, and with reason, to their surprising incidents and splendid coloring alone for their effect, Voltaire has made his tale the setting of innumerable gems of satire, wisdom, and wit. The failings of humanity, the defects of society and of governments, the errors of theology, and the hypocrisy of priesthoods, are all in turn the subjects of what may be called raillery rather than sarcasm, which is a term too harsh for the pleasantries of the book. Also, like so many novels that hold a high and permanent place, it contains much of the personal experience of the author. *Zadig* is Voltaire, with increased personal advantages, and more simplicity, reticence, and modesty.

• All the early misfortunes of *Zadig*, like those of Voltaire, are

persecutions caused by his efforts to set people right. When these have quite crushed him, a happy discovery not only rescues him from capital punishment, by hanging, but renders him the favorite of the King of Babylon, in whose good graces he makes such progress as presently to become grand vizier; and under his sage and benevolent administration the empire attains to the height of prosperity and content. "The king said, 'The great minister!' the queen said, 'The charming minister!'" and both added, 'What a pity if he had been hanged!'" His adverse destiny, however, intervenes—the king is jealous of the queen's regard for him—and after many escapes he becomes the slave of an Arabian merchant, Sétoc, who presently discovers his merit and makes him his intimate friend. Zadig "was vexed to discover that Sétoc adored the celestial army—that is to say, the sun, moon, and stars—according to the ancient usage of Arabia." He argued with him, but in vain:

When evening came, Zadig lighted a great number of flambeaux in the tent where they were about to sup; and when his patron appeared, he cast himself on his knees before the wax-lights, and thus addressed them: "Eternal and brilliant luminaries, be ye always propitious to me!" Having offered this prayer, he seated himself at table without looking at Sétoc. "What is the meaning of this?" said Sétoc, astonished. "I do as you do," answered Zadig. "I adore these candles while I neglect their master and mine." Sétoc comprehended the profound sense of this apologue. The wisdom of his slave entered into his soul; he no more lavished incense on creations, but worshipped the Being who had made them.

Before he left Arabia with his master, he had, among other good acts, put a virtual end to the practice of permitting wives to burn themselves with their deceased husbands; and for this, he found on his return, he was to suffer:

During his journey to Bassora, the priests of the stars had resolved to punish him. The jewelry and ornaments of the young widows whom they sent to the pile had been the perquisite of the priests; and this was why they wished to burn Zadig for the ill turn he had played them. They therefore accused him of entertaining erroneous views about the celestial army; they deposed against him, and made oath that they had heard him affirm that the stars did not set in the sea. This frightful blasphemy caused the judges to tremble; they were ready to rend their garments when they heard these impious

words—and would have done so, without doubt, if Zadig had had the means of paying for them. As it was, in the excess of their grief, they condemned him to be burnt at a slow fire.

From this fate, however, he was rescued, and dispatched on business by his master to the Isle of Serendib, where he presently has relations as agreeable with Nabussan, its discerning monarch, as Voltaire's with Frederick, though the Oriental bears no resemblance to the Prussian ruler. Zadig's observations on the government of the island furnish the author with the opportunity of a little satire on the farmers-general of the French revenue:

This good prince was always flattered, deceived, and robbed; it was who should most pillage his treasury. The receiver-general of Serendib always set the example, faithfully followed by the rest. This the king knew; he had often changed his treasurers, but he had never been able to change the established mode of dividing the king's revenues into two unequal parts, of which the smallest always came to his majesty, and the largest to the administrators.

Nabussan confided his trouble to Zadig: "You who know so many fine things," said he, "can you not tell me how to find a treasurer who will not rob me?" "Assuredly," said Zadig. "I know an infallible mode of giving you a man who will keep his hands clean." The king was charmed, and asked, while he embraced him, how this was to be done. "You have only," said Zadig, "to cause all those who present themselves for the dignity of treasurer to dance; he who dances the lightest will be infallibly the most honest man." "You jest," said the king; "a pleasant way certainly of choosing a receiver of my revenues! What! do you pretend that he who cuts the neatest caper will be the most upright and capable financier?" "I will not answer for his being the most skillful," returns Zadig; "but I assure you that he will, without doubt, be the most honest." Zadig spoke with so much confidence that the king believed that he had some supernatural secret by which to recognize financiers. "I do not like the supernatural," said Zadig; "people and books who deal in prodigies have always displeased me. If your majesty will allow me to put what I propose to the proof, you will be convinced it is the easiest and simplest thing possible." Nabussan was much more astonished to hear that the



secret was simple, than if it had been given him as a miracle. "Well," said he, "do as you think proper." "Leave me alone for that," said Zadig; "you will gain more in this proof than you think for." The same day he made public, in the king's name, that all candidates for the post of receiver-in-chief of the moneys of his gracious majesty Nabussan, son of Nussanab, must present themselves in habits of light silk, on the first day of the month of the crocodile, in the king's antechamber. They came, accordingly, to the number of sixty-four. Musicians had been placed in a neighboring saloon. All was prepared for the ball; but the door of this saloon was closed; and it was necessary in order to enter it, to pass through a small gallery which was somewhat dark. An usher went to meet and introduce each candidate in succession by this passage, in which each was left alone for some minutes. The king, aware of the plan, had spread out all his treasures in this gallery. When all were assembled in the saloon, the king ordered the dance to begin. Never had any dancers performed more heavily or with less grace; all held their heads down, their backs bent, their hands glued to their sides. "What rascals!" murmured Zadig. One alone made his steps with agility, his head up, his look assured, his body straight, his arms extended, his thighs firm. "Ah! the honest man, the excellent man!" cried Zadig. The king embraced this upright dancer, declaring him treasurer, and all the others were punished and taxed, with the utmost justice—for every one, in the time spent in the gallery, had filled his pockets till he could hardly walk. The king was distressed for human nature that among these sixty-four dancers there should be sixty-three thieves. The dark gallery was named the Corridor of Temptation. In Persia these sixty-three lords would have been impaled; in other countries a chamber of justice would have consumed in costs three times the money stolen, replacing nothing in the king's coffers; in yet another kingdom they would have been honorably acquitted, and the light dancer disgraced; in Serendib they were only sentenced to add to the public treasure, for Nabussan was very indulgent.

Many and entertaining are the adventures by which the at length happy Zadig is elevated to the side of his beloved Astarte on the throne of Babylon.



## IX.—THE PHILOSOPHES—AND ROUSSEAU.

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The characteristic feature of the literary history of the great middle part of the eighteenth century in France was the influence of the "philosophes." We have already seen who some of the philosophes were. Diderot and the contributors to the "*Encyclopædia*" constituted the main body of the group. Montesquieu and Voltaire were its precursors. But the prevailing spirit of the whole period, no matter what literary form be examined, was essentially the same. The old order of things was criticised and attacked in every part, especially in religion and politics. But what was most criticised and attacked were the constitution and dogma of the church. Voltaire, the most active, versatile, and effective combatant of the age, had no quarrel with the political institutions of his time. There were certain reforms in these that he wished to see effected, but he desired nothing further. Nor was the church as a social institution the special object of his attack. It was rather its extraordinary political privileges, which he considered unjust; its traditional theology, which he considered irrational; its excessive and all-pervading ecclesiasticism, which he considered absurd. Montesquieu, too, had no thought of political or ecclesiastical reforms being brought about other than by methods which to-day would be described as constitutional. But it is, of course, nevertheless

true that the opinions of these men, as to matters of faith and religion, were opposed to the orthodoxy of the day. And not only they, but almost every writer of note in France during the period we are now contemplating, was, in respect of theology, at most only a deist. The church, once so all-powerful, and her creed, once so universally accepted, were left with scarcely a defender. Atheism, however, does not seem to have been much accepted. Even Voltaire was not an atheist. But a profession of simple deism as opposed to Christian theism and the teachings of the Bible was general, not only out of the church, but in it. For the most part those in the church who did not accept the church's teachings kept a discreet silence. "I may have my fist full of opinions and yet care only to open my little finger." This is the way one prominent churchman expressed his caution, and the caution was general.

It was, however, in the writings of the philosophes proper, rather than in those of Voltaire and Montesquieu, that the anti-spiritual, anti-religious spirit of the age was most plainly shown. The encyclopædists frankly ignored the existence of any divine power other than what may be discerned in the forces of nature. The "*System of Nature*," a work supposed to have been written by BARON HOLBACH, the friend of Diderot and a chief supporter of the encyclopædist movement, represented God as the mere creation of superstitious men. "*Man a Machine*," "*Man a Plant*," were the titles of somewhat similar productions written by LA METTRIE, another member of the group. It is noteworthy that Voltaire opposed and condemned all these works, and even undertook the duty of seriously refuting the first of them. HELVÉTIUS, a third member of the group, wrote works in which he founded morals wholly on self-interest. It is noteworthy that the works

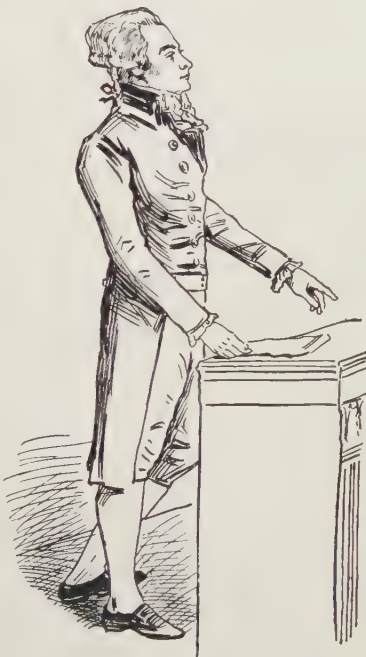
of Helvétius were also assailed, not only by Voltaire and his party, not only by the church and its party (indeed, they were burned by the common hangman), but also even by Diderot himself. The greatest philosophical thinker of the age, however, was Condillac. CONDILLAC (1715-80), though at one time he was a member of the encyclopedist group, did not maintain his association with it. But his philosophy, although it was not materialistic, was scarcely more in consonance with the spiritualistic ideas of the orthodox school than materialism was. With him all ideas were but sensations. The human ego was but a bundle of sensations. When sensation ended, all ended.

When so critical and examinant were the writings of all the leading spirits of the age it is not to be wondered at if among the more humble and less instructed people of the time a feeling of uncertainty and disquietude as to all the graver matters of life and conduct also sprang up. As a matter of fact, it did spring up, and the common people broke away from their theologic moorings and drifted into unbelief and dissatisfaction with existing institutions quite as hopelessly as did their better-instructed fellows. In their case, however, unbelief and dissatisfaction were intensified by the terrible injustice which they suffered at the hands of both church and state.

Contemporary with the "philosophes," and for a time a member of the encyclopedist group, although he shortly severed himself from it, was a writer who was destined to have more influence upon the rank and file of the people—that great body that we have described as blindly drifting into unbelief and dissatisfaction for want of guidance and efficient leadership—that any other writer of his day, perhaps than all other writers of his day put together. This writer was Jean Jacques Rousseau.

ROUSSEAU (1712-78) is one of whom in many respects it is hard to treat seriously. So ill disciplined and ill governed in his own character and conduct, he nevertheless was

instrumental in changing materially the direction and quality of all child-training and child-education, not only in his own country but throughout the world, not only for the time being but for all time ; so unattractive in his own personality, he nevertheless won as his disciples the most attractive personalities in France ; so illogical and absurd in his own mental processes, he nevertheless set going in others ideas of government, of social organization, of public and individual rights and responsibilities, which



ROBESPIERRE.

soon became the accepted tenets of the great majority of his countrymen.

But what we are chiefly concerned with here is the remarkable influence that Rousseau exerted as a sort of counteracting force against the influence of the encyclopedists. The encyclopedists were positivist, practical, and materialistic. Rousseau was dreamy, sentimental, and an effective, if not a very orthodox or logical,

exponent of religion. He managed, especially after his death, to obtain the good-will and respect of almost all parties. The men of the revolution regarded him with a reverence that was little short of idolatry. Robespierre would have made his teachings a new bible for France, and if necessary have died for them as a martyr. On the other hand, those whom Robespierre would have proscribed, the church party and their supporters, found in Rousseau's influence one of their main bulwarks. It was this influence, at any rate, that kept religion and virtue and public morality from going out of fashion in those revolutionary days.

And Rousseau's influence on literature and literary style was equally remarkable. He gave to the literature of the world a new quality—a delight in and a feeling for natural beauty. He also restored to French literature a quality it had once possessed, but now had lost—the glow, the color, the heat, the passion, of intimate self-revelation. While in no sense a poet, he brought back to literature for the use of poetry the lyric thrill of genuine emotion. And French literature since his day has never ceased to feel that thrill.

Rousseau and the encyclopedists mark, therefore, the cleaving of the ways. Rousseau is the natural head of that school in literature which regards the personal, the romantic, the beautiful, as the chief objects of thought and expression. The encyclopedists, "the philosophes," are the head of that school which regards accurate description, exact analysis, and the bringing together of true cause and effect, as the chief ends.

## X. ROUSSEAU.

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Rousseau's "*Émile*" is admitted by all educators to have marked an epoch in the history of education. It is indeed an inspiring work, and written with a wonderful eloquence. It exerted a great influence on the education, and therefore on the civilization of mankind, and brought to its author incredible sufferings, whether the evils of which he complained were real or imaginary. Rousseau's book is well known, and so is Rousseau, but the character of the man and his career have in them something mysterious, which makes the subject an interesting one to study. The author of "*Émile*" must be known in order to understand his works, for, unlike the great men of the seventeenth century, whose personality can hardly be seen in their writings, the men of the eighteenth century permeated their works with their own opinions and enabled us to study their character and even the events of their lives. Rousseau made himself known to us not only through his letters, but also through that extraordinary book, the "*Confessions*." Never before had any one disclosed with such self-pride, with such cynicism, his most secret thoughts and acts; never, also, has any one written in a more magic and enchanting style the history of a wretched life.

Rousseau was born in Geneva in 1712; his mother died at his birth, and his father, an intelligent and honorable watchmaker, brought him up most tenderly, although he



seems to have singularly lacked judgment in his dealings with his son. Rousseau relates that when only seven years old his father and he used to spend whole nights reading together. This must have contributed to give him that peculiar nervousity which made him so miserable all his life. His first seven or eight years were very happy, but unfortunately his father left Geneva, and the boy remained with his Uncle Bernard, who sent him and his son to the school of Pastor Lambercier's. Here again were a few happy moments for Rousseau.

After leaving the pastor he became the apprentice of a notary who dismissed him for his stupidity, and then he began his apprenticeship with an engraver. His master was a brutal man and treated him most cruelly. The boy learned to steal and to lie, and we might imagine that his intelligence would be stupefied by the blows which he received, but he tells us that every minute which he could rob from his employer was devoted to reading. It is this taste for reading which enabled him to acquire an immense fund of knowledge, which he knew so well how to use later. One day, having gone out of town with some friends, they returned at the very moment when the guards were closing the gates for the night. Rousseau did not dare to face the next day the wrath of his master, and resolved to run away from his country. Shortly afterward we see him at Annecy, at the house of Madame de Warens, that kind and lovable woman, whose errors and vagaries have been so ruthlessly disclosed to us by the man to whom she gave hospitality and whom she was to make great. When Rousseau entered her house she was twenty-eight years old and he sixteen; but she produced such an impression on the boy that, at first sight, he felt for her a love which was to last for many years.

Rousseau having manifested his intention of becoming a



Catholic, Madame de Warens sent him to Turin to be instructed. Several years later he returned to the Calvinistic faith and was formally readmitted among the citizens of Geneva. His life at Turin was one of perpetual change. One day he was on the verge of starvation; another day he was secretary, or rather lackey, of an old lady; then he entered the service of a nobleman, who treated him most kindly and whose son gave him Latin lessons. He had the best prospects of success in life, when he suddenly neglected his work, was dismissed by his patrons, and went with one of his Genevese countrymen, imagining that he could earn his living by giving exhibitions of a toy fountain in the villages. In 1729 he returned to Madame de Warens, who did all in her power to help him. She sent him to a seminary to study for the priesthood, but he was declared unfit for that calling, and then she had music lessons given to him. On his return from Lyons he found to his dismay that his benefactress had gone to Paris.

During her absence Rousseau led the life of a vagabond, going from one place to another, teaching music without knowing it and learning it by dint of teaching, interpreter to a Greek archimandrite, living from charity, sleeping in the public squares at Lyons, and finally reaching Chambéry, where Madame de Warens had established her residence. Now we come to the most happy period in Rousseau's life. At a short distance from Chambéry are "Les Charmettes," which Madame de Warens and her protégé have rendered immortal, and to which are attracted all who have been captivated by the wonderful style and the many grand thoughts of the author of "*Émile*." There Rousseau studied nature as well as science and literature, there he lived happily with a woman whom he adored and who seems to have ennobled his soul by her gentleness and devotion. Unfortunately, having gone to Montpélier to

be treated for an imaginary disease, he found on his return that Madame de Warens had taken another companion. He left her and became the preceptor of two boys. Let us note here that Rousseau, the theoretic educator, proved to be a very poor teacher. He was too nervous, too visionary, and he says he felt like killing his pupils when they did not behave.

We next find Rousseau in Paris, where he had gone to introduce a method which he had invented for the notation of music by numbers. Although he had little success in his method, his journey was of service to him, as he was thrown in contact with people of influence, and soon obtained the secretaryship to the French ambassador to Venice. In that city he took a greater passion still for music, and on his return to France we see him opposed to French music and producing his charming opera, "*Le Devin du Village*" ("*The Village Oracle*"). This work was played before the king and had the greatest success. Louis XV. desired to see the author, but Rousseau declined the invitation. The pretext which he gives is not good, and we can only account for his conduct by the fact that his character was becoming morose, unsociable, and most strange. It was at this time that he met Thérèse Levasseur, with whom he lived to the end of his life. She was a serving-woman at the boarding-house where he took his meals, was completely illiterate, and nearly stupid. She seemed to have had some qualities, and her husband, as he finally called himself, might have been happy with her if there had not stood between them the forms of five little children absent from the family hearth. Five children were born to Thérèse, and yet she was childless! The unnatural father had sent the poor babes at their birth to the foundling asylum, and neither he nor the mother ever knew what had become of them. In his "*Confes-*

sions" Rousseau blames himself for abandoning the children, but tries, nevertheless, to give some excuses for his conduct. In order to appreciate "*Émile*" we must endeavor to forget Rousseau's utter lack of paternal feeling, for otherwise his character appears to us so repulsive that we can not see the beauties of his book.

It was only at the age of thirty-seven that Rousseau became a celebrated literary man, for his "*Village Oracle*" was produced after his famous discourses. The Academy of Dijon gave as a subject for a prize essay: "Has the Restoration of the Sciences Contributed to Purify or to Corrupt Morals?" Rousseau took the pessimistic side of the question, and attacked with unsurpassed eloquence the society of his time and civilization itself. Three years later he wrote for the same academy another fiery essay on the subject: "What Is the Origin of Inequality Among Men, and Is It Authorized by Natural Law?" He won the prize for the first essay, but the second did not meet with the same success with the judges of the contest. Both discourses, however, made him celebrated, and threw him with the greatest people of the time. He filled an office at M. de Fraucueil's, but he suddenly left his patron and determined to earn his living by copying music by the page. He took refuge in Madame d'Epinay's house in the country, wishing to live for the study of nature only, and yet compelled by an irresistible impulse to write for the world "*La Nouvelle Héloïse*," "*Le Contrat Social*" and "*Émile*."

While at Madame d'Epinay's hermitage Rousseau fell madly in love with Madame d'Houdetot, who in her turn loved Saint-Lambert, the soldier poet. The hermit, the reformer of mankind, was thrown into paroxysms of grief, and his imagination was filled with visions of love. His sensual nature completely mastered him, and he threw

upon paper the passionate letters of Julie and Saint Preux in "*La Nouvelle Héloïse*." This work had an immense success, for the style is entrancing and the story is interesting and pathetic; but, in spite of what the author says, it is an immoral book, and more dangerous than many coarse and obscene stories. Of his three great books "*The Social Contract*" exerted, after a few years, the greatest influence in the eighteenth century. It became the gospel of the men of the revolution, and certainly hastened the great outbreak against tyranny. It is, however, very Utopian in its character and is now scarcely read. "*Émile*" is the most enduring of Rousseau's works. There are many paradoxes and Utopian ideas in the book, but it deserves the careful attention of all educators. It has one great quality—it leads us to think—and it has inspired to a great extent subsequent works on education.

Rousseau went from the Hermitage to Montmorency, but in order to escape persecution, after the publication of "*Émile*," he wandered from Yverdun to Neufchâtel; then to the island of St. Peter, in the Lake of Bienne; then to Wooton, in Derbyshire, where he accepted the hospitality of Hume, the historian. He soon quarreled with his protector and returned to France, where no one molested him. In 1770 we see him in Paris, his mind under a cloud, and producing those strange "*Dialogues*" between Jean Jacques and Rousseau. He devoted the greater part of his time to botany, and was very poor and morose and gloomy. M. de Girardin offered him a home at Ermenonville, twenty miles from Paris, and there, on July 2, 1778, he died suddenly.

Rousseau's character was a strange mixture of the good and the bad. We must praise many lofty sentiments in his works and his spirit of independence, but he committed many vile acts and gloried in them. We pity his misfor-

tune, but we can not admire him as a man. As a writer we must give him the highest praise and say that this master of style deserves to be buried in the Pantheon, by the side of the greatest authors. His influence as an educator has been beneficial, but his influence on literature has been still more beneficial. He is the true founder of the romantic school, and his cries of anguish have been transformed into the soul-stirring and truly lyric songs of Hugo and Musset.

ALCÉE FORTIER.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

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Rousseau was the direct inspirer of the men who made the French Revolution. His fervid declamation about equality and brotherhood, and his sentimental republicanism, were seed as well suited to the soil in which they were sown as Montesquieu's reasoned constitutionalism was unsuited to it. Rousseau, indeed, if the proof of the excellence of preaching is in the practice of the hearers, was the greatest preacher of the century. He denounced the practice of putting infants out to nurse, and mothers began to suckle their own children; he recommended instruction in useful arts, and many an *émigré* noble had to thank Rousseau for being able to earn his bread in exile; he denounced speculative atheism, urging the undogmatic but emotional creed, and the first wave of the religious reaction was set going, to culminate in the catholic movement of Chateaubriand and Lamennais. But in literature itself his influence was quite as powerful. He was not, indeed, the founder of the school of analysis of feeling in the novel, but he was the popularizer of it. He was almost the founder of sentimentalism in general literature; and he was absolutely the first to make word-painting of nature an al-

most indispensable element of all imaginative and fictitious writing both in prose and poetry.—SAINTSBURY.

Rousseau was essentially an idealist, but an idealist whose dreams and visions were inspired by the play of his sensibility upon his intellect and imagination, and therefore he was the least impersonal of thinkers. Generous of heart, he was filled with bitter suspicions; inordinately proud, he nursed his pride amid sordid realities; cherishing ideals of purity and innocence, he sank deep in the mire of imaginative sensuality; effeminate, he was also indomitable; an uncompromising optimist, he saw the whole world lying in wickedness; a passionate lover of freedom, he aimed at establishing the most unqualified of tyrannies; among the devout he was a free-thinker, among the philosophers he was the sentimentalist of theopathy. He stands apart from his contemporaries: they did homage to the understanding; he was the devotee of the heart: they belonged to a brilliant society; he was elated, suffered, brooded, dreamed in solitude: they were aristocratic, at least by virtue of the intellectual culture which they represented; he was plebeian in his origin and popular in his sympathies. He became a great writer comparatively late in life, under the compulsion of a ruling idea which lies at the center of all his more important works, excepting such as are apologetic and autobiographical. Nature has made man good and happy; society has made him evil and miserable. Are we, then, to return to a state of primitive savagery? No; society can not retrograde. But in many ways we can ameliorate human life by approximating to a natural condition.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

Jean Jacques Rousseau was a writer who marched under none of the recognized banners of the day. The encyclopædists had flattered themselves that they had tuned the opinion of all Europe to their philosophical strain, when suddenly they heard his discordant note. Without family, without friends, without home, wandering from place to place, from one condition in life to another, he conceived a species of revolt against society, and a feeling of bitterness against those civil organizations in which he could never find a suitable place. He combated the atheism



of the encyclopædists, their materialism and contempt for moral virtue, for pure deism was his creed. He believed in a supreme being, a future state, and the excellence of virtue, but, denying all revealed religion, he would have men advance in the paths of virtue, freely and proudly, from love of virtue itself, and not from any sense of duty or obligation.—BOTTA.

Others have left works more perfect, and above all more beneficent, but I do not believe that in the whole history of literature there exists the man whose influence has been so decisive, so far-reaching, and upon whom it is so difficult to form a fair judgment. Measured from the point of view of to-day, this influence seems disproportioned to the genius which exercised it and to the value of the works of that genius. But the most perfect works do not necessarily count the most, and the keenest criticism can not always explain the mysterious affinities of genius, of thought, and of morals. It has been questioned whether this influence, the extent and duration of which are incontestable, has been a salutary one. We are not now to consider this. An alluring, an irresistible guide, Rousseau has not been an infallible one. Many have gone astray in following him. If he had a kind and feeling heart, he had not less a faulty intellect, and his paradoxes often paralyzed his good intention. The ability with which he followed them to their extreme conclusion, like the eloquence he employed in their service, only served to render them more dangerous. Therefore in penetrating so deeply the consciousness of the generations that followed him, Rousseau's thought has drawn upon them many ills. It has involved them in many gropings and errors, in many delusive visions and sufferings.—EDOUARD ROD.



## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM ROUSSEAU.

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### THE EDUCATION OF WOMAN.

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*From "Emile" or "Treatise on Education."*

It is not good for man to be alone. Emile is a man. We have promised him a companion, and she must be given him. This companion is Sophie. In what region is her abode? Where shall we find her? In order to find her we must know her. Let us first know what she is, and then we shall the more easily determine the place where she dwells. And when we have found her all will not yet be done. . . .

Sophie ought to be a woman, as Emile is a man—that is, she should have whatever is befitting the constitution of her species and of her sex, in order to fill her place in the physical and moral world. Let us, then, begin by examining the conformities and the differences between her sex and ours.

All that we know with a certainty is that the only thing in common between man and woman is the species, and that they differ only in respect of sex. Under this double point of view we find between them so many resemblances, and so many contrasts, that it is perhaps one of the wonders of Nature that she could make two beings so similar and yet constitute them so differently.

These correspondences and these differences must needs have their moral effect. This consequence is obvious, is in conformity with experience, and shows the vanity of the disputes as to the superiority or the equality of the sexes; as if each of them, answering the ends of Nature according to its particular destination, were not more perfect on that account than if it bore a greater resemblance to the other! With respect to what they

have in common, they are equal; and in so far as they are different, they are not capable of being compared. A perfect man and a perfect woman ought no more to resemble each other in mind than in features; and perfection is not susceptible of greater and less.

In the union of the sexes, each contributes equally toward the common end, but not in the same way. Hence arises the first assignable difference among their moral relations. One must be active and strong, the other passive and weak. One must needs have power and will, while it suffices that the other have little power of resistance.

This principle once established, it follows that woman is especially constituted to please man. If man ought to please her in turn, the necessity for it is less direct. His merit lies in his power; he pleases simply because he is strong. I grant that this is not the law of love, but it is the law of Nature, which is anterior even to love. . . .

The moment it is demonstrated that man and woman are not and ought not to be constituted in the same way, either in character or in constitution, it follows that they ought not to have the same education. In following the directions of Nature, they ought to act in concert, but they ought not to do the same things; their duties have a common end, but the duties themselves are different, and consequently the tastes which direct them. After having tried to form the natural man, let us also see, in order not to leave our work incomplete, how the woman is to be formed who is befitting to this man.

Would you always be well guided? Always follow the indications of Nature. All that characterizes sex ought to be respected or established by her. You are always saying that women have faults which you have not. Your pride deceives you. They would be faults in you, but they are virtues in them; and everything would not go so well if they did not have them. Prevent these so-called faults from degenerating, but beware of destroying them.

All the faculties common to the two sexes are not equally divided, but, taken as a whole, they offset one another. Woman is worth more as a woman, but less as a man; wherever she improves her rights she has the advantage and wherever she attempts to usurp ours she remains inferior to us. Only exceptional cases can be urged against this general truth—the

usual mode of argument adopted by the gallant partisans of the fair sex.

To cultivate in women the qualities of the men, and to neglect those which are their own, is, then, obviously to work to their detriment. The shrewd among them see this too clearly to be the dupes of it. In trying to usurp our advantages, they do not abandon their own; but from this it comes to pass that, not being able to manage both properly on account of their incompatibility, they fall short of their own possibilities without attaining to ours, and thus lose the half of their value. Believe me, judicious mother, do not make of your daughter a good man, as though to give the lie to Nature, but make of her a good woman, and you may be sure that she will be worth more for herself and for us.

Does it follow that she ought to be brought up in complete ignorance, and restricted solely to the duties of the household? Shall man make a servant of his companion? Shall he deprive himself of the greatest charm of society? The better to reduce her to servitude shall he prevent her from feeling anything or knowing anything? Shall he make of her a real automaton? No, doubtless. Nature, who gives to women a mind so agreeable and so acute, has not so ordered. On the contrary, she would have them think, and judge, and love, and know, and cultivate their mind as they do their form: these are the arms which she gives them for supplementing the strength which they lack, and for directing our own. They ought to learn multitudes of things, but only those which it becomes them to know. . . .

On the good constitution of mothers depends, in the first place, that of children; on the care of women depends the early education of men; and on women, again, depend their manners, their passions, their tastes, their pleasures, and even their happiness. Thus the whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves loved and honored by them, to educate them when young, to care for them when grown, to counsel them, to console them, and to make life agreeable and sweet to them—these are the duties of women at all times, and what should be taught them from their infancy. So long as we do not ascend to this principle we shall miss the goal, and all the precepts which we

give them will accomplish nothing either for their happiness or for our own.

Little girls, almost from birth, have a love for dress. Not content with being pretty, they wish to be thought so. We see in their little airs that this care already occupies their minds; and they no sooner understand what is said to them than we control them by telling them what people will think of them. The same motive, very indiscreetly presented to little boys, is very far from having the same power over them. Provided they are independent and happy, they care very little as to what will be thought of them. It is only at the expense of time and labor that we subject them to the same law.

From whatever source this first lesson comes to girls, it is a very good one. Since the body is born, so to speak, before the soul, the first culture ought to be that of the body; and this order is common to both sexes. But the object of this culture is different; in one this object is the development of strength, while in the other it is the development of personal charms. Not that these qualities ought to be exclusive in each sex, but the order is simply reversed; women need sufficient strength to do with grace whatever they have to do; and men need sufficient cleverness to do with facility whatever they have to do.

The extreme lack of vigor in women gives rise to the same quality in men. Women ought not to be robust like them, but for them, in order that the men who shall be born of them may be robust also. In this respect the convents,\* where the boarders have coarse fare, but many frolics, races, and sports in the open air and in gardens, are to be preferred to the home where a girl, delicately reared, always flattered or scolded, always seated under the eyes of her mother in a very close room, dares neither to rise, to walk, to speak, nor to breathe, and has not a moment's liberty for playing, jumping, running, shouting, and indulging in the petulance natural to her age; always dangerous relaxation, or badly conceived severity, but never anything according to reason. This is the way in which the young are ruined both in body and in heart.

Whatever obstructs or constrains nature is in bad taste, and this is as true of the ornaments of the body as of the ornaments of the mind. Life, health, reason, and comfort, ought

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\* In Rousseau's day in France almost the entire education of girls when not obtained at home, was obtained in convents.

to take precedence of everything else. There is no grace without freedom. Delicacy is not languor, and one need not be sickly in order to please. We excite pity when we suffer; but pleasure and desire seek the freshness of health.

Children of the two sexes have many amusements in common, and this ought to be so. Is not the same thing true of them when grown? They have also individual tastes which distinguish them. Boys seek movement and noise—drums, tops, carts; but girls prefer what appeals to the sight and serves for ornament—mirrors, trinkets, bits of silk, etc., and especially dolls. The doll is the especial amusement of this sex; and in this case the girls' taste is very evidently determined by her destination. The mechanics of the art of pleasing consists in dress, and this is all of this art that children can cultivate.

Observe a little girl spending her time with her doll, constantly changing its attire, dressing and undressing it hundreds of times, continually seeking for new combinations of ornaments, well or badly selected, no matter which; the fingers lack deftness, the taste has not been formed, but the disposition is already seen. In this endless occupation the time goes on without notice; the hours pass, but she takes no note of them; she even forgets to eat, and has a greater hunger for dress than for food. But, you will say, she dresses her doll, but not herself. Doubtless. She sees her doll, but does not see herself; she can do nothing for herself; she has not been developed; she has neither talent nor strength; she is all absorbed in her doll, and on it she spends all her coquetry. She will not always devote herself to it, but waits the moment when she shall be her own doll.

Here, then, is a very decided primitive taste, and you have only to follow it and regulate it. It is certain that the little one wishes with all her heart that she might adorn her doll and adjust its sleeve, its neckerchief, its furbelows, its lace; but in all this she is made to depend so rigorously on the pleasure of others that it would be very much easier for her to owe everything to her own industry. Thus appears the reason for the first lessons which are given her: they are not tasks which are prescribed for her, but kindnesses which we feel for her. And, in fact, almost all little girls learn to read and write with



*Jean-Pierre Rousseau*

*From the engraving by Heath after  
the drawing by Mauzaisse*







repugnance; but as to holding the needle, they always learn this willingly. They imagine themselves already grown, and take pleasure in thinking that these talents will one day be of service in adorning them.\*

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\* Of course the selection comprises only a part of Rousseau's discussion of the subject. "The Education of Women" is the fifth and last book of "*Emile*."

## XI. THE AGE OF NAPOLEON.

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In literature the age of Napoleon was almost wholly one of tradition. It had little distinct character of its own. As to form, it adopted and repeated the conventions that had been honored in the age that preceded it. As to matter, it adopted partly the ideas of the philosophes and partly those of Rousseau. At the same time it manifested in no small measure that scientific spirit of exact analysis and appreciation of fact which has been so strongly the characteristic of literary work throughout the world generally during the whole of the nineteenth century. But in even a more marked degree it gave evidence of the approach of that romantic movement which, under the leadership of Victor Hugo, was the characteristic feature of much of the purely literary work of France during the great middle part of the century.

It must not be forgotten that the eighteenth century, for all its vigor of thought, its unrest, its determined investigation into the causes and roots of things, its wholesale onslaughts on established order in church and state, was, in purely literary matters, decidedly conservative and un-inventive. Voltaire, with all his versatility of thought and range of accomplishment was, in poetry, in the drama, in every sort of imaginative prose, the mere follower and imitator of standards and ideals that had already been set up. And if Voltaire were this way, how much more so were the writers of less force and mental calibre. Even

Rousseau, although he was in the realm of imaginative literature the one great name of the age, gave to literature no new form, nor freed it from any one of its many inherited restrictions. The consequence was that the poetry and the drama of the Napoleonic age, which was merely a continuation of the preceding age, were still characterized by the same strict conventions as to construction and form, the same strict limitations as to what ideas, what situations, what characteristics, were proper to use or not to use, that had been set up by Malherbe and Boileau in the seventeenth century. In other words, poetic composition, the dramatic art, and the production of imaginative literature of every sort, had become almost a rule of thumb. The great works of the age, therefore, in imaginative literature, were few.

There was also another reason for this. The revolution had been an epoch of chaos. Napoleon had come and established order and was now supreme. The revolution had been an epoch in which every innovator had some hopes of success. The natural reaction had followed. Napoleon wanted no innovators and the temper of the time supported him. Napoleon's own predilections were for positive knowledge, exact information, the exposition of the ways things actually happen, the discovery of demonstrable law—in other words, for science—and men of science he encouraged. He found them—and this, too, pleased him, for it favored his purposes—little inclined to be doctrinaires, to be teachers of the people, to be meddling in public affairs. Science, then, under the Napoleonic rule had honor; that is to say, natural and mathematical science; for moral, metaphysical, and historical science the matter-of-fact emperor discouraged as being too nebulous. Cuvier, Lamarck, Bichat, St. Hilaire, Laplace, Lagrange, are some of the names of those who gave

lustre to French science in Napoleon's time, and whom Napoleon dignified with public trusts or with public consideration. Cuvier was a member of the council of state, and afterward minister of public instruction. Laplace was president of the senate. Lagrange was grand officer of the Legion of Honor and a count of the empire.

We have said that under the empire poetry had little merit. There was one poet, however, *ANDRÉ CHÉNIER* (1762-1794), who, had he been allowed to live, would undoubtedly have been the empire's most brilliant literary star. Even as it was, he was the greatest poet France possessed for over one hundred years, the greatest, indeed, outside of the drama, from the time of Ronsard down to the poets of the middle nineteenth century. But Chénier's head fell upon the scaffold some years before the empire began. Although a classic in his tastes, and in his severe and exact ideas of art—that is to say, although a poet of the school of Racine—Chénier showed the warmth, the glow, the color, the intimate personal note, the versatility of expression, that characterized the romantic school of the subsequent '30s and '40s. And that school justly regarded him as their precursor.

The great names in pure literature in the actual age of Napoleon were only two—Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël. It is customary to speak of Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël together, and this for a reason apart from the fact that they were the two sole stars of the epoch they illuminated. Taken together, Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël typify and represent completely the whole literary movement of the Napoleonic age, apart from its scientific movement.

*CHATEAUBRIAND* (1768-1848) represents the reaction of the age against the doctrinaire spirit of the philosophes. He also represents its reaction in favor of a conception of



CHATEAUBRIAND.

deity more spiritual, more personal, more intimate and self-revealing, than that afforded by the cold deism of the philosophes, or even by the sentimental deism of Rousseau. He further represents those peculiar transitional features of the age, its employment, after the manner of Rousseau, of the emotional element in literature, and its appreciation, also after Rousseau, of natural beauty. This latter feature has indeed become a cardinal element of modern literature. It is safe to say that no writer since Chateaubriand's time, professing to deal with nature at all, does other than deal with her sympathetically and lovingly; or, if not so, then as Byron (who was a professed pupil of Chateaubriand) dealt with her, adoringly, gloriously. Nature poetry, the merely descriptive sort, came to an end with Rousseau and Chateaubriand, although they both wrote only in prose.

Chateaubriand in his dealing with religion was something more than an apologist for a personal God. He was a positive and ardent advocate of the religion of Christ. His "*Genius of Christianity*" is perhaps unequaled in literature as an exposition of the value of religion as a factor in art and in poetry. But he claimed for Christianity a validity in this respect exceeding that of all other religions because it could do more for art and poetry, and, through art and poetry, more for life, than all other religions.

Chateaubriand's apology for Christianity was rhetorical and sentimental. But there was another writer of the Napoleonic age whose apology was vigorously logical. This was JOSEPH DE MAISTRE (1753-1821). De Maistre's works were not published until a little after the Napoleonic era had ended. But they essentially belong to that era. In a style of exposition and with a power and skill of argument the very highest, they put forward the claim that without religion there can be no organized society,

and without an absolutely ruling, all-powerful church there can be no religion. De Maistre and the philosophes were as opposite as pole and pole. The age, however, was not wholly unsuited to a theory of absolutism.



## XII. MADAME DE STAËL.

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Centuries seldom divide in fact as they do in men's minds the development of a nation or of a literature. But a combination of political and social events makes the early years of the nineteenth century truly epoch-making in French thought and art. The year 1801 saw the first striking work of Chateaubriand, whose "*Atala*" struck a new note that for decades was a dominant one. In 1802 came the artistically less valuable but ethically more significant "*Delphine*" of Madame de Staël; and this was followed in 1807 by her yet more striking "*Corinne*;" while already in 1810 she had finished her epoch-making essay on Germany, by which, as has been happily said, she sowed the whole century with fertile ideas, and breathed into intellectual France a wholly new spirit.

To understand how she did this and to realize just what it was that she did, we must know something of her birth, her early training, and her later experiences, personal and political. She was the daughter of the Genevese banker Necker, a noted finance minister of Louis XVI. Her mother was Suzanne Curchod, once beloved of the historian Gibbon. She passed her precocious youth in one of the most brilliant of Parisian literary salons, sharpening her wits by the conversation of some of the keenest minds of that age, moulding her critical powers on great though not always lovable mod-

els, and nursing ambitions of an intellectual position as brilliant and as predominant as that of her parents.

There, as a young woman, she became thoroughly interpenetrated with the confident optimism of the eighteenth century, and an optimist she remained to the last, through all the horrors of the Terror, and the despotic tyranny of Napoleon. She believed in ideals and she believed in herself. She was positive, self-assertive, writing much, and very fond of conversation in which she could bear the leading part. Her marriage in 1786 to the Swedish ambassador, Baron von Staël-Holstein, her motherhood, her later affection for Benjamin Constant, never seem to have affected her independence. There must have been something virile in her appearance, if we may trust the reports of contemporary writers and painters, which a modern critic, Sorel, has thus summarized:

“Expressive features, a complexion dark rather than fresh colored, yet growing lively in conversation, sculpturesque shoulders, powerful arms, robust hands, high forehead, black hair, falling in thick curls, vigorous nose, strongly marked mouth, prominent lips, opened wide to life and speech, an orator’s mouth, with a frank, good-humored smile, all the genius shining in her eyes, her sparkling glances, deep and gentle in repose, imperious when a flash crossed them. That flash came when she spoke. It was by her speech that she beguiled and persuaded and conquered.”

Her literary career began in 1788, two years after her marriage, with “*Letters on Rousseau*,” for whose social ideas she proclaimed an ardent admiration. The revolution began the next year and divorced her from politics. She felt obliged to leave Paris shortly before the great September massacres of 1792, and went to Coppet, in

Switzerland, and afterward to England, engaging in mild political intrigue, and returning to Paris after Robespierre's fall, to remain there with brief visits to Coppet until she was expelled by Napoleon.

Her opposition to the emperor was instinctive. It seemed to soothe her vanity to feel that she could irritate the compeller of states. She counted exile as a vantage ground from which to shoot her darts and nurse the pride of martyrdom. It came in 1803, and brought her much more than she sought in it, for it took her to Germany and revealed to her a new philosophy and new ideals of literary art. Without her exile she could have written neither "*Corinne*" nor "*Germany*," and it is by these books, unread though they be to-day, that she still influences profoundly the literary life of France, into which she was the first to introduce a strong Germanic current. She did not return to Paris till the fall of Napoleon, and even after Waterloo she remained much abroad, for her health was gradually failing. She died two years later, in 1817.

Madame de Staël was not a great writer, if we regard only her diction or her style; but her books are a remarkable reflection of the world of thought in which she moved, and they propagated its enthusiasms for progress, happiness, and "humanity," into the romantic generation. From the first she showed "a European spirit in a French mind." She saw that the democratic tendencies of the new era would bring into literature a more energetic beauty, more emotion, and more philosophy. So she set about liberating French literature from itself, and widening its ideals by contrast and comparison with the idealistic and subjective Teutonic literatures. Now the immediate result of this was to give an immense impetus to the reawakening of egoism that



ANNE LOUISE GERMAINE NECKER, BARONNE DE STAEL

*From an Engraving by E. Scriven after the Painting by F. Gerara*



had been inaugurated by Rousseau. Men sought to be individual, where the classicists had sought to conform to pre-established types. Thus the French romantic movement, one of the greatest literary regenerations in history, was very largely the work of Madame de Staël.

But, as I have said elsewhere, this very success has resulted in neglect. Thoughts that were new in "*Corinne*," or in "*Germany*," became commonplaces when they had won general acceptance. So her work appealed to later generations neither by its novelty nor by its beauty; though in the breadth and fullness of its thought it surpassed that of all her contemporaries.

The first of the greater books, "*Delphine*," is, as she says in her preface, a sort of veiled confession. To reveal the reader to himself seemed to her the purpose of fiction. So both "*Delphine*" and "*Corinne*" are drawn from her own life. They are observations on a cultured and artistic society by one of its members. Madame de Staël was an aristocrat, and her novels are aristocratic. She was also a born pedagogue, and instinctively she added a moral purpose to her psychologic one. Thus she was among the first to claim a serious place for fiction, beside the drama in France, and above it in the rest of Europe, a place that it has maintained during the century. Her pictures of a soul-life that should be its own interpretation gave the novel a new source of power that was not exploited to the full till the time of George Sand.

The heroine of "*Delphine*" is the now familiar "misunderstood woman," who tries to follow an inner light and is shipwrecked on the conventions of a society that in its own defense is forced to condemn her. It is a novel of youth and passion, palpitating with feeling, spoken rather than

written. A contemporary said that the heroine talked "of love like a bacchante, of God like a Quaker, of death like a grenadier, and of the future like a sophist." "*Corinne*" is more mature, and gives to its author's ideas their most complete expression. The heroine is still Delphine—that is, Madame de Staël—she is still doubly inspired by talent and by love, still the "misunderstood woman," another link to bind Rousseau's Julie to George Sand's Indiana, but yet giving freer wing to her genius, more fully developed, more independent. There is a deep pathos in the conception of woman's nature in which every talent is a minister to love and an occasion of suffering, and there is admirable art in the way in which Italy is set off against England, nature against respectability, ideal love against smug calculation, passion against cant, the glory of the ideal against material wealth and comfort. Emotional rather than thoughtful, the book irradiates melancholy with optimistic idealism. Happiness is ever beckoning her onward. No wonder that "*Corinne*" became to a whole generation the book of generous passion and of ideal love.

"*Germany*" formulated the artistic, ethical, and philosophic principles of "*Corinne*." These Madame de Staël thought she discerned in Kant and Fichte, as they were interpreted to her by August Wilhelm Schlegel. She busied herself little with the German state or people. Philosophy and art absorbed her interest, for it was from them that she hoped to draw Parthian shafts to shoot at her Corsican persecutor. She found also in the metaphysics of Kant an antidote for the cold, dry, and not very penetrating light of the French encyclopædists, and by bringing what she found to general attention she certainly widened and liberalized, though it can hardly be said that she strengthened or deepened, the philosophic and religious thought of the next generation in France.



On the literary side, the effect of "*Germany*" was to clear the ground of classical prejudices, and to prepare it for a modern literature that should draw from modern conditions a more natural nourishment for a fuller life. For that a new art was to arise from the chaos of the revolution was Madame de Staël's absolute conviction; and the zeal of her preaching was so persuasive that, though she originated little, she inflamed all with the glow of her cosmopolitan enthusiasm.

These three books—" *Delphine*," " *Corinne*," and " *Germany* "—must be associated with the name of Madame de Staël to every student of French literature. Her earlier volumes on the " *Influence of the Passions* " and on " *Literature in Its Connection with Social Institutions* " may be passed over; nor need we dwell on her " *Considerations on the French Revolution*," published a year before her death. It is as the mother of romanticism, the nurser of the spark of Rousseau's fire, the link binding the literature of the nineteenth century to the ideals of the eighteenth, that we think of her, and she was all these pre-eminently because of her " *Germany* " and her " *Corinne*."

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Madame de Staël has been pronounced by the general voice to be among the greatest of all female authors. She was early introduced to the society of the cleverest men in Paris, with whom her father's house was a favorite resort, and before she was twelve years of age

such men as Raynal, Marmontel, and Grimm used to converse with her as though she were twenty, calling out her ready eloquence, inquiring into her studies, and recommending new books. She thus imbibed a taste for society and distinction, and for bearing her part in the brilliant conversation of the salon. At the age of twenty she became the wife of the Baron de Staël, the Swedish minister at Paris. On her return, after the Reign of Terror, Madame de Staël became the center of a political society, and her drawing-rooms were the resort of distinguished foreigners, ambassadors, and authors. On the accession of Napoleon a mutual hostility arose between him and this celebrated woman, which ended in her banishment and the suppression of her works.—BOTTA.

## II.

Chateaubriand must be placed side by side with Madame de Staël as another of those brilliant and versatile geniuses who have dazzled the eyes of their countrymen and exerted a permanent influence on French literature. While the eighteenth century had used against religion all the weapons of ridicule, he defended it by poetry and romance. Christianity he considered the most poetical of all religions, the most attractive, the most fertile in literary, social, and artistic results, and he develops his theme with every advantage of language and style in the "*Genius of Christianity*" and the "*Martyrs*." Some of the characteristics of Chateaubriand, however, have produced a seriously injurious effect on French literature, and of these the most contagious and corrupting is his passion for the glitter of words, and the pageantry of high-sounding phrases.—BOTTA.

## III.

The personality of Madame de Staël is far from being attractive, owing to her excessive vanity, which dis-



FRANÇOIS RENÉ AUGUSTE, VICOMTE DE CHATEAUBRIAND



gusted all her contemporaries, and the folly which made a woman who had never been beautiful, continue, long after she had ceased to be young, to give herself in life and literature the airs of a newest Héloïse. But she is a very important figure in French literature. This influence, put briefly, was to break up the narrowness of French notions on all subjects, and to open it to fresh ideas. Her political and general works led the way to the nineteenth century side by side with Chateaubriand's, but in an entirely different sense. What Chateaubriand inculcated was the sense of the beauty of older and simpler times, countries, and faiths, which the self-satisfaction of the eighteenth century had obscured; what Madame de Staël had impressed were general ideas of liberalism and progress, to which the same century, in its crusade against superstition and its rather short-sighted belief in its own enlightenment, was equally blind.—SAINTSBURY.

#### IV.

In 1803 Madame de Staël received orders to trouble Paris with her torrent of ideas and of speech no longer. The illustrious victim of Napoleon's persecution hastened to display her ideas at Weimar, where Goethe protected his equanimity as well as might be from the storm of her approach, and Schiller endured her literary enthusiasm with a sense of prostration. August Wilhelm von Schlegel, tutor to her sons, became the interpreter of Germany to her eager and apprehensive mind. Having annexed Germany to her empire, she advanced to the conquest of Italy, and had her Roman triumph. England, which she had visited in her revolutionary flights, and Italy conspired in the creation of her novel "*Corinne*" (1807). It is again the history of a woman of genius, beautiful, generous, enthusiastic, whom the world understands imperfectly, and whom her English lover, after his fit of Italian romance, discards with the characteristic British phlegm. The paintings of Italian nature are rhetorical exercises; the writer's sympathy

with art and history is of more value; the interpretation of a woman's heart is alive with personal feeling. Madame de Staël's novels are old now, which means that they once were young; and for her own generation they had the freshness and charm of youth.—EDWARD DOWDEN,

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM MME. DE STAEL.

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THE HISTORY OF CORINNE—TOLD BY HERSELF

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*From "Corinne." \**

LIFE IN ENGLAND ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

Oswald, I begin with the avowal which must determine my fate. If, after reading it, you find it impossible to pardon, do not finish this letter, but reject and banish me; yet if, when you know the name and destiny I have renounced, all is not broken between us, what follows may then serve as my excuse.

Lord Edgarmond was my father. I was born in Italy; his first wife was a Roman; and Lucy, whom they intended for your bride, is my sister, by an English lady—by my father's second marriage. Now, hear me! I lost my mother ere I was ten years old, and, as it was her dying wish that my education should be finished ere I went to England, I was confided to an aunt at Florence, with whom I lived till I was fifteen. My tastes and talents were formed ere her death induced Lord Edgarmond to have me with him. He lived at a small town in Northumberland, which can not, I suppose, give any idea of England; yet was all I knew of it for six years. My mother, from my infancy, impressed on me the misery of not living in Italy; my aunt had often added that this fear of quitting her country had broken her heart. My good aunt herself was persuaded, too, that a Catholic would be condemned to perdition for settling in a Protestant coun-

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\* The selection constitutes Chapter I of Book XIV of "*Corinne*."



try; and though I was not infected by this fear, the thought of going to England alarmed me much. I set forth with an inexplicable sense of sadness. The woman sent for me did not understand a word of Italian. I spoke it now and then to console my poor Thérésina, who had consented to follow me, though she wept incessantly at leaving her country; but I knew that I must unlearn the habit of breathing the sweet sounds so welcome even to foreigners, and, for me, associated with all the recollections of my childhood. I approached the north unable to comprehend the cause of my own changed and sombre sensations. It was five years since I had seen my father. I hardly recognized him when I reached his house. Methought his countenance was very grave; yet he received me with tenderness, and told me I was extremely like my mother. My half-sister, then three years of age, was brought to me: her skin was fairer, her silken curls more golden, than I had ever seen before; we have hardly any such faces in Italy; she astonished and interested me from the first; that same day I cut off some of her ringlets for a bracelet, which I have preserved ever since. At last my stepmother appeared, and the impression made on me by her first look grew and deepened during the years I passed with her. Lady Edgarmond was exclusively attached to her native country; and my father, whom she overruled, sacrificed a residence in London or Edinburgh to her wishes. She was a cold, dignified, silent person, whose eyes could turn affectionately on her child, but who usually wore so positive an air that it appeared impossible to make her understand a new idea, or even one phrase to which she had not been accustomed. She met me politely, but I soon perceived that my whole manner amazed her, and that she proposed to change it if she could. Not a word was said during dinner, though some neighbors had been invited. I was so tired of this silence that, in the midst of our meal, I strove to converse a little with an old gentleman who sat beside me. I spoke English tolerably, as my father had taught me in childhood; but happening to cite some Italian poetry, purely delicate, in which there was some mention of love, my stepmother, who knew the language slightly, stared at me, blushed, and signed for the ladies, earlier than usual, to withdraw, prepare tea, and leave the men to themselves during dessert. I knew nothing of this custom, which "would not be believed in Venice." Society agreeable without women! For a

moment I thought her ladyship so displeased that she could not remain in the same room with me; but I was reassured by her motioning me to follow, and never reverting to my fault during the three hours we passed in the drawing-room, waiting for the gentlemen. At supper, however, she told me, gently enough, that it was not usual in England for young ladies to talk; above all, they must never think of quoting poetry in which the name of love occurred. "Miss Edgarmond," she added, "you must endeavor to forget all that belongs to Italy; it is to be wished that you had never known such a country." I passed the night in tears; my heart was oppressed. In the morning, I attempted to walk; there was so tremendous a fog that I could not see the sun, which at least would have reminded me of my own land; but I met my father, who said to me: "My dear child, it is not here as in Italy; our women have no occupations save their domestic duties. Your talents may beguile your solitude, and you may win a husband who will take pride in them; but in a country town like this, all that attracts attention excites envy, and you will never marry at all if it is thought that you have foreign manners. Here, every one must submit to the old prejudices of an obscure county. I passed twelve years in Italy with your mother: their memory is very dear to me. I was young then, and novelty delightful. I have now returned to my original situation, and am quite comfortable; a regular, perhaps rather a monotonous life, makes time pass unperceived; one must not combat the habits of a place in which one is established; we should be the sufferers if we did, for, in a scene like this, everything is known, everything repeated; there is no room for emulation, but sufficient for jealousy; and it is better to bear a little *ennui* than to be beset by wondering faces that every instant demand reasons for what you do." My dear Oswald, you can form no idea of my anguish while my father spoke thus. I remembered him all grace and vivacity, and I saw him stooping beneath the leaden mantle which Dante invented for hell, and which mediocrity throws over all who submit to her yoke. Enthusiasm for nature and the arts seemed vanishing from my sight; and my soul, like a useless flame, consumed myself, having no longer any food from without. As I was naturally mild, my stepmother had nothing to complain of in my behavior toward her; and as for my father, I loved him tenderly. A conversation with him was my only remaining pleasure; he was re-

signed, but he knew that he was so; while the generality of our country gentlemen drank, hunted, and slept, fancying such life the wisest and best in the world. Their content so perplexed me that I asked myself if my *own* way of thinking was not a folly and if this solid existence, which escaped grief, in avoiding thought and sentiment, was not far more enviable than mine. What would such a conviction have done for me? It must have taught me to deplore as a misfortune that genius which in Italy was regarded as a blessing from Heaven.

Toward the close of autumn, the pleasures of the chase frequently kept my father from home till midnight. During his absence, I remained mostly in my own room, endeavoring to improve myself. This displeased Lady Edgarmond. "What good will it do?" she said; "will you be any the happier for it?" The words struck me with despair. What, then, is happiness, I thought, if it consist not in the development of our faculties? Might we not as well kill ourselves physically as morally? If I must stifle my mind, my soul, why preserve the miserable remains of life that would but agitate me in vain? But I was careful not to speak thus before my stepmother. I had essayed it once or twice, and her reply was, that women were made to manage their husbands' houses, and watch over the health of their children; all other accomplishments were dangerous, and the best advice she could give me was to hide those I possessed. This discourse, though so commonplace, was unanswerable; for enthusiasm is peculiarly dependent on encouragement, and withers like a flower beneath a dark or freezing sky. There is nothing easier than to assume a high moral air, while condemning all the attributes of an elevated spirit. Duty, the noblest destination of man, may be distorted, like all other ideas, into an offensive weapon by which narrow minds silence their superiors as their foes. One would think, if believing them, that duty enjoined the sacrifice of all the qualities that confer distinction; that wit were a fault, requiring the expiation of our leading precisely the same lives with those who have none; but does duty prescribe like rules to all characters? Are not great thoughts and generous feelings debts due to the world, from all who are capable of paying them? Ought not every woman, like every man, to follow the bent of her own talents? Must we imitate the instinct of the bees, whose every succeeding swarm copies the last, without improvement or variety? No,

Oswald; pardon the pride of your Corinne; I believed myself intended for a different career. Yet I feel myself submissive to those I love as the females then around me, who had neither judgment nor wishes of their own. If it pleased you to pass your days in the heart of Scotland, I should be happy to live and die with you; but far from abjuring imagination, it would teach me the better to enjoy nature, and the further the empire of my mind extended, the more glory should I feel in declaring you its lord.

Lady Edgarmond was almost as importunate respecting my thoughts as my actions. It sufficed not that I led the same life as herself, it must be from the same motives; for she wished all the faculties she did not share to be looked on as diseases. We lived pretty near the sea; at night, the north wind whistled through the corridors of our old castle; by day, even when we reunited, it was wondrously favorable to our silence. The weather was cold and damp; I could scarce ever leave the house with pleasure. Nature, now, treated me with hostility, and deepened my regrets of her sweetness and benevolence in Italy. With the winter, we removed into the city, if so I may call a place without public buildings, theater, music, or pictures.

In the smallest Italian towns we have spectacles, improvisatores, zeal for the fine arts, and a glorious sun; we feel that we live—but I almost forgot it in this assembly of gossips, this depository of disgusts, at once monotonous and varied. Births, deaths, and marriages composed the history of our society; and these three events differed not the least here from what they are elsewhere. Figure to yourself what it must have been for me to be seated at a tea-table, many hours each day after dinner, with my stepmother's guests. These were the seven gravest women in Northumberland—two were old maids of fifty, timid as fifteen. One lady would say: "My dear, do you think the water hot enough to pour on the tea?" "My dear," replied the other, "I think it is too soon; the gentlemen are not ready yet." "Do you think they will sit late to-day, my dear?" says a third. "I don't know," answers a fourth; "I believe the election takes place next week, so perhaps they are staying to talk over it." "No," rejoins a fifth, "I rather think they are occupied by the fox-hunt which occurred last week; there will be another on Monday; but for all that, I suppose they will come soon." "Ah! I hardly expect it," sighs the sixth; and all again is silence.

The convents I had seen in Italy appeared all life to this; and I knew not what would become of me. Every quarter of an hour some voice was raised to ask an insipid question, which received a lukewarm reply; and *ennui* fell back with redoubled weight on these poor women, who must have thought themselves most miserable had not habit, from infancy, instructed them to endure it. At last the gentlemen came up; yet this long-hoped-for moment brought no great change. They continued their conversation round the fire; the ladies sat in the center of the room distributing cups of tea; and, when the hour of departure arrived, each went home with her husband, ready for another day, differing from the last merely by its date on the almanac. I can not yet conceive how my talent escaped a mortal chill. There is no denying that every case has two sides; every subject may be attacked or defended; we may plead the cause of life, yet much is to be said for death, or a state thus resembling it. Such was my situation. My voice was a sound either useless or troublesome to its hearers. I could not, as in London or Edinburgh, enjoy the society of learned men, who, with a taste for intellectual conversation, would have appreciated that of a foreigner, even if she did not quite conform with the strict etiquettes of their country. I sometimes passed whole days with Lady Edgarmond and her friends, without hearing one word that echoed either thought or feeling, or beholding one expressive gesture. I looked on the faces of young girls, fair, fresh, and beautiful, but perfectly immovable. Strange union of contrasts! All ages partook of the same amusements; they drank tea and played whist; women grew old in this routine here. Time was sure not to miss them; he well knew where they were to be found.

An automaton might have filled my place, and could have done all that was expected of me. In England, as elsewhere, the divers interests that do honor to humanity worthily occupy the leisure of men, whatever their retirement; but what remained for women in this isolated corner of the earth? Among the ladies who visited us there were some not deficient in mind, though they concealed it as a superfluity; and toward forty this slight impulse of the brain was benumbed like all the rest. Some of them, I suspected, must, by reflection, have matured their natural abilities; sometimes a look or murmured accent told of thoughts that strayed from the beaten track, but the petty opin-



ions, all-powerful in their own little sphere, repressed these inclinations. A woman was considered insane, or of doubtful virtue, if she ventured in any way to assert herself; and, what was worse than all these inconveniences, she could gain not one advantage by the attempt. At first, I endeavored to rouse this sleeping world. I proposed poetic readings and music, and a day was appointed for this purpose; but suddenly, one woman remembered that she had been three weeks invited to sup with her aunt; another, that she was in mourning for an old cousin she had never seen, and who had been dead for months; a third, that she had some domestic arrangements to make at home; all very reasonable; yet, thus forever were intellectual pleasures rejected; and I so often heard them say "that can not be done" that, amid so many negations, *not to live* would have been to me the best of all. After some debates with myself, I gave up my vain schemes; not that my father forbade them, he even enjoined his wife to cease tormenting me on my studies; but her insinuations, her stolen glances while I spoke, a thousand trivial hindrances, like the chains the Lilliputians wove round Gulliver, rendered it impossible for me to follow my own will; so I ended by doing as I saw others do, though dying of impatience and disgust. By the time I had passed four weary years thus, I really found, to my severe distress, that my mind grew dull, and, in spite of me, was filled by trifles. Where no interest is taken in science, literature, and liberal pursuits, mere facts and insignificant criticisms necessarily become the themes of discourse; and minds, strangers alike to activity and meditation, become so limited as to render all intercourse with them at once tasteless and oppressive. There was no enjoyment near me save in a certain methodical regularity, whose desire was that of reducing all things to its own level; a constant grief to characters called by Heaven to destinies of their own. The ill-will I innocently excited, joined with my sense of the void all around me, seemed to check even my breath. Envy is only to be borne where it is excited by admiration; but oh the misery of living where jealousy itself awakens no enthusiasm! Where we are hated as if powerful, though in fact allowed less influence than the obscurest of our rivals. It is impossible simply to despise the opinions of the herd: they sink, in spite of us, into the heart, and lie waiting the moments when our own superiority has involved us in

distress; then—then, even an apparently temperate “*Well?*” may prove the most insupportable word we can hear. In vain we tell ourselves “Such a man is unworthy to judge me, such a woman is incapable of comprehending me:” the human face has great power over the human heart; and when we read there a secret disapprobation, it haunts us in defiance of our reason. The circle which surrounds you always hides the rest of the world; the smallest object close before your eyes intercepts their view of the sun. So is it with the set among whom we dwell: nor Europe nor posterity can render us insensible to the intrigues of our next-door neighbor; and whoever would live happily in the cultivation of genius ought to be, above all things, cautious in the choice of his immediate mental atmosphere.



ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM CHATEAUBRIAND.

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*MY FIRST COMMUNION.*

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*From the "Autobiography."*

The period fixed on for my first communion approached, a moment when the future profession of the child is decided on in the family. This religious ceremony takes the place, with young Christians, of the assumption of the virile robe among the Romans. Madame de Chateaubriand had come to be present at the first communion of a son, who, after being united to God, was about to be separated from his mother.

My piety appeared sincere. I edified the whole college. My looks were ardent, and my repeated abstinences were carried so far as to cause some uneasiness to my masters. They feared the excess of my devotion, and their enlightened religion sought to temper my fervor.

I had as confessor the superior of the seminary of the Eudists—a man of fifty years of age, and of a rigid aspect. Every time that I presented myself at the penitential tribunal, he scrutinized me anxiously. Surprised at the slight nature of my faults, he knew not how to reconcile my agitation with the unimportance of the secrets which I confided to his breast. The nearer Easter Day approached, the more pressing became the father's questions.

"Do you conceal nothing from me?" said he.

I replied:

"No, my father."

"Have you not committed such or such a fault?"

"No, my father."

And always the same answer:

"No, my father."

He dismissed me doubtingly, sighing, and gazing at me as if he would read to the bottom of my soul; whilst I withdrew from his presence, pale and disfigured like a criminal.

I was to receive absolution on Ash Wednesday. I passed the night between Tuesday and Wednesday in prayer, and in reading with terror "*The Book of Confessions Badly Made.*" On Wednesday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, we set out for the seminary. Our parents accompanied us. All the empty fame which has since been attached to my name would not have caused Madame de Chateaubriand one single moment of the proud gratification which she felt, as a Christian and as a mother, in seeing her son ready to participate in the great mystery of religion.

On reaching the church, I prostrated myself before the sanctuary, and remained as if annihilated. When I arose to repair to the sacristy, where the superior waited for me, my limbs shook under me. I threw myself at the feet of the priest, and it was only in an almost unintelligible voice that I could succeed in pronouncing my *confiteor*.

"Well, have you forgotten nothing?" said the man of God to me.

I remained mute. He once more commenced his questions, and the fatal "*No, my father,*" issued from my lips. He seemed to commune with himself; he sought counsel from Him who conferred on the Apostles the power of binding and loosing souls. Then, making an effort, he prepared to give me absolution.

A thunderbolt from heaven would have caused me less terror. I exclaimed:

"I have not told you all!"

This terrible judge—this delegate of the Sovereign Arbiter, whose features inspired me with such terror—became at once the most affectionate of pastors. He embraced me, and burst into tears.

"Come," said he, "my dear son, take courage!"

I shall never experience another such moment in my life. If the weight of a mountain had been taken from my breast, I could not have felt more relieved. I sobbed with happiness. I may

venture to say that on this day I was made an honest man. I felt that I should never survive remorse. What must the remorse for crime be, then, if I felt such deep remorse for having concealed the faults of a child? But how divine is this religion which can thus take possession of our good qualities! What precepts of morality will ever supply the place of this Christian institution!

The first confession made, the rest cost me nothing. My concealed childish peccadilloes, which would have made the world laugh, were weighed in the balance of religion. The superior found himself much embarrassed. He would have preferred delaying my communion; but I was about to leave the College of Dol, and soon to enter the navy. He discovered with great sagacity, from the very character of my juvenile errors, all insignificant as they were, my *penchants*. He was the first man who read the secret of what I might afterward become. He guessed my future passions; he did not conceal from me what he saw good in my disposition, but he also predicted my future faults.

"After all," added he, "time is wanting for your penance, but you are cleansed from your sins by a courageous, though tardy, avowal."

Raising his hand, he pronounced the formula of absolution. On this second occasion, his terrible arm shed upon my forehead only celestial dew. I bent my head to receive it, and my feelings partook of the felicity of angels. I hastened to throw myself into the arms of my mother, who was waiting for me at the foot of the altar. I appeared to my masters and comrades no longer the same being. I walked with a light step, with head erect, and joyous air, in all the triumph of repentance.

The following day, which was Holy Thursday, I was admitted to that touching and sublime ceremony, of which I have in vain attempted to trace a picture in "*The Genius of Christianity*." True, I there met once more my usual humiliations; my bouquet and my dress were less handsome than those of my companions; but, for that day, all was to God, and for God. I know well what it is to have faith. The real presence of the victim in the holy sacrament of the altar was as plainly felt by me as the appearance of my mother at my side. When the host was placed upon my lips, I felt as if my whole inward being were lighted up. I trembled with respect, and the only earthly subject

which occupied my mind was the dread of profaning the holy bread.

“Le pain que je vous propose,  
Sert aux anges d'aliment,  
Dieu lui même le compose,  
De la fleur de son froment.”\*

—RACINE.

I could now understand the courage of the martyrs. I could at that moment have confessed Christ on a bed of torture, or in the midst of the lions.

I love to recall these moments of happiness, which were so soon to be followed for me by the tribulations of the world. On comparing these ardent emotions with the transports which I am about to describe; on seeing the same heart experience, in an interval of three or four years, all the gentlest and most salutary influences of innocence and religion, and all that is most seducing and fatal in passion, the reader may choose between the two sorts of felicity. He will see in what direction happiness, and, above all, repose, is to be sought.

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\* “The bread offered you is such food as angels use. God himself prepares it, and from His choicest wheat.”

### XIII. THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT.

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As the romantic movement is the cardinal feature in the history of French literature in the nineteenth century, and in many respects the most important feature in all its history, it will be best to be at some little pains to understand it. We will, therefore, first, summarize briefly the history of French literature previous to the romantic movement, and then, secondly, indicate briefly what the romantic movement really was.

The sixteenth century, the age of the renaissance, was the age in which the literature of France first assumed its modern form. It was an age of freshness, of exuberance, of invention, of individual experiment and trial. In many respects it was a lawless and self-governing age. But it was the age of Rabelais and Calvin, and later on of Amyot and Montaigne, and it could not be but that the literature of the country should receive and retain the impress, as regards style, phraseology, and method of treatment, of these great masters. In poetry it was the age of Ronsard and the Pléiade, that remarkable group of scholars who consciously and formally endeavored to mould French poetry and the literary language of France upon the models of the classic literatures of Greece and Rome; the age, too, when Jodelle, one of the Pléiade, instituted the French tragic drama upon the restricted plan of the Latin dramatist, Seneca. But, on the whole, it was an uncritical age, with many

extravagances, many incongruities, and much verbal infelicity and uncouthness.

Next followed the early half of the seventeenth century. In this age Malherbe, the uncompromising stickler for conformity to time-honored patterns, the exclusion of the outré and the fantastic, the avoidance of everything startling and uncommon, was the dominant influence. French poetry became a thing of art, of highly finished and definitely constructed art. So also did the drama. Corneille, by his vigor of thought and imagination, was able, it is true, to give the drama dignity and power. But he worked wholly within conventional limits. Beyond these he dared not go. In prose, too, the elder Balzac, by the example of a style at once chaste, clear, precise, and logical, established a model which the sentiment of the age set up as obligatory. The vocabularies which Malherbe allowed and Balzac used became the standard literary vocabularies of the language—a result not without its benefits to the literature of the day, but still inimical to literary progress.

Then followed the age of Louis XIV., the age, that is to say, of Molière and Racine and Boileau. Boileau had become the great literary lawgiver of the land, and he strictly followed Malherbe, only with a still more arbitrary rule, with narrower ideas, less knowledge of the literature of the world, less sympathy for that which was innovating or unconventional. Classicism—the following of exact models, the strict use of the standard vocabulary and of accepted phraseology, the employment only of characters and situations and incidents sanctioned by traditional authority—reached its *ne plus ultra*. Molière's great genius, working in a field comparatively new, the field of satiric comedy, was almost a law unto itself. But not wholly so. He, too, had to

conform to the canons of his age. Much more so Racine, who, in the tragic drama, could adopt no plan of structure, no method of development, no principle of characterization, no variation of phraseology or versification, that had not been used by antecedent tragic dramatists. The classicism of the *Pléiade*, of Ronsard and Jodelle, narrowed, pruned, expurgated, conventionalized, through Malherbe and Boileau, had become the one standard and the one measure for all.

Then followed the eighteenth century, an age which, in respect to literary ideals, adopted to the last extreme the conventions which had descended to it from the preceding age. It was an age great in some forms of literature: as, for example, in ridicule and satire, in the hands of Voltaire; in historic and sociologic generalizations, in the hands of Montesquieu; in positive exposition of ascertained facts and laws, in the hands of the encyclopædists. But in respect to those branches of literature with which literary form is most concerned—poetry, the drama, and every sort of imaginative literature—it was a decadent, a sterile, a barren age. The one great exception was Rousseau, the impractical, half-rational, untutored Rousseau; and with Rousseau first began that great reaction against cut-and-dried theories in the literary art which later on was called the “romantic movement.”

Following the eighteenth century was the age of Napoleon—an age of transition, an age of continued decadence, but also of continued and increasing reaction against classicism. The constructive effort of this age is seen almost wholly in the work of Chateaubriand, who has been rightfully called “the father of the romantic movement.” The critical and expository work of the age, so far as the reaction against classicism is con-



cerned, is seen almost wholly in the work of Madame de Staël. But Madame de Staël was something more than a mere critic and expositor. In her enthusiasm for liberty, and in her sympathy with the emotions and impulses of womankind, she gives indication of the approach of the new era, both in its better and in its less admirable phases. She is indeed its true herald.

There was an interval, however. A new generation had to be born. In the meantime LAMARTINE (1790-1869) appeared and became an almost exactly representative connecting link between the old era and the new. He had the reverence for established form, the spirit of uniform compliance with accepted canons of taste, which ever characterized the classicists. But he also had the note of sentiment, of sympathy with nature, of self-revelation, of meditative tenderness, which was one of the characteristic features of the new era. But the note had no real power in it, no dynamic quality, no vital intrinsic character or individuality. It was merely a premonition of the voices of the greater age that was to follow.

Such was the antecedent history of the romantic movement. We shall now state briefly the characteristics of the movement itself.

First, it enfranchised the vocabulary of literature. Wherever it saw a word or a phrase that was appropriate, whether in the ancient storehouses of the language, the forgotten masterpieces of the early ages, or in the common parlance of every-day life, or in the terminology of science or art or philosophy, or even in geography or biography, it took it. Proper names, once so scrupulously avoided, were used wherever needed. So also with other words.

Second, it got rid, as with the stroke of a knife, of the



*Samuel*



habit (which it should be mentioned, was a characteristic of the decadent era of classicism, rather than of classicism itself) of using elaborate periphrases instead of simple terms. In other words, it asserted the liberty of calling a spade a "spade," and not "that useful implement of husbandry by whose aid the sod's upturned." In the eighteenth century, especially, it scarcely ever happened, in poetry, or in dramatic poetry, or in sentimental prose, that a thing was called by its own rightful name.

Third, it broke up the custom of having all literary work conform to conventional patterns. In the drama, for example, the classical models that Jodelle had introduced, and that Corneille and Racine had sedulously patterned after, models in which Aristotle's three unities of "time," "place," and "action" were scrupulously adhered to, were left to take their chances with other models. The freedom, the unconventionality of the English drama, the drama of Shakespeare, was recognized as both reasonable and full of artistic possibilities. Similarly, the models of time-honored use in other forms of poetic composition, the fable, the ode, the epistle, were assigned their true value. They were to be models for emulation only, not necessarily for imitation. There was but one standard of excellence admitted, the standard of intrinsic worth. The one question to be asked of a play or a poem was: "Is it good?"

Fourthly, it changed entirely the accepted ideas in France in regard to versification. For monotony of cadence it substituted variety; for uniformity of construction it substituted diversity; for arbitrary rules it substituted the rule of reason. The verse was correct if it was effective; it was harmonious and artistic if it gave pleasure to the ear and enjoyment to the reader.

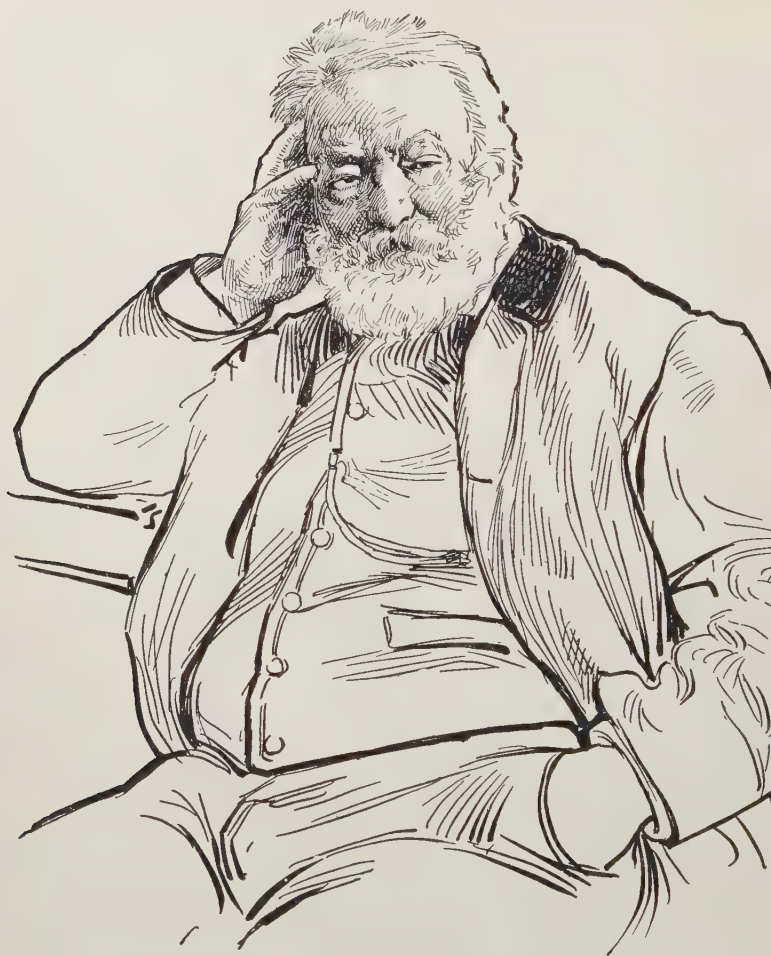
Finally it did away with all restrictions as to subjects of treatment, and as to the use of one sort of situation or incident or character in preference to another. It strove for and insisted upon absolute freedom in all these respects. It went to every region and to every age for its *dramatis personæ*, and for its subjects for dramatic exposition or for epic or lyric treatment. It saw in human nature no limitations, only boundless possibilities for artistic effort, and these possibilities it claimed for literature's rightful own.

Of this great movement, in many respects, as we have said, the greatest and most remarkable in the whole literary history of France, the chief leader, advocate, and defender, was Victor Hugo.

#### XIV. HUGO.

Victor Hugo was born in Besançon in 1802. His father, a general in the French army, was a Voltairian and a Bonapartist. His mother was a Vendéean, a Catholic and a royalist. She joined her husband in Italy, and later on in Spain, but the insecurity of the peninsula for the French compelled Madame Hugo to return to France and to Paris with her children. She became wholly absorbed by their education, and in a very special sense was the personal inspiration of her gifted son. Victor worked indefatigably. After winning several prizes from the French Academy at fifteen and seventeen, he wrote an ode upon the death of the Duc de Berry, which so excited the admiration of Chateaubriand that he called him "the sublime child."

At twenty he gathered his best productions into a volume, "*Odes et Diverses Poésies*," which excited great admiration. During this period he wrote as an intense Catholic, a reactionary, and a classicist; but a change soon took place. His life was too intense and too exuberant not to feel the inadequacy of the literary theories of the time. His "*Cromwell*" in 1827 contained a preface which was the declaration of independence of French literature, and the piece was a bold, romantic drama. In 1828 he published "*Les Orientales*," breathing the choicest spirit of eastern inspiration. In 1830 "*Hernani*" was represented at the Théâtre Français, the national theater, in the midst



VICTOR HUGO.

of violent opposition, which showed the deep interest that the Parisians took in the question at issue. The battle—not a figure of speech—was more than a contention for a



theory of literature, it was one for the deliverance of literary art. His plays then followed in rapid succession, "*Marion Delorme*" in 1831, "*Le Roi s'Amuse*" in 1832, "*Lucrèce Borgia*," and "*Marie Tudor*" in 1833, "*Angelo*" in 1835, "*Ruy Blas*" in 1838, and "*Les Burgraves*" in 1843. This ended his dramatic works, but parallel with them he published important lyrics, "*Les Chants du Crépuscule*" in 1835, "*Les Voix Intérieures*" in 1837, and "*Les Rayons et Les Ombres*" in 1840, all of which bear witness to marked changes in his religious convictions. A devout Catholic, he became first a mere theist, then, for awhile, a spiritualist, and a pantheist. In politics also he had left early royalistic enthusiasm to become the poet of Bonapartism. In the meantime he had also written several works of fiction,



VICTOR HUGO.  
(From an early portrait.)

among which was his great work, "*Notre Dame de Paris*," published in 1831. His popularity simply forced him upon the French Academy, to which he was admitted in 1841. Two years later he was raised to the peerage and thereby received the greatest honors which a man of letters could covet. For ten years he was almost entirely absorbed by politics, into which he entered

like a poet—that is, without measure. He even aspired to be president of the second republic. At the time of the *coup d'état* he fled to Belgium, and then settled with his family first in the island of Jersey and then in Guernsey.

His exile not only brought him back to literature, but was the period of his most profitable work.

Hugo's first efforts were burning satires upon Napoleon III. Probably no poet ever had more hatred in his heart than Hugo at this time. In "*Napoléon le Petit*" and "*Les Châtiments*" we find the most poetical expressions of indignation by the side of the most undignified insults and the plebeian rantings of a mad patriot.



VICTOR HUGO'S HOUSE IN LA PLACE  
ROYALE.

Fortunately he returned to a calmer strain, which gave us "*Les Contemplations*" in 1856, and the first part of the "*Légende des Siècles*" in 1859. The great work of Hugo, "*Les Misérables*," appeared in 1862. Two years later followed some literary studies and "*William Shakspeare*." This book was intended first of all as an introduction to a translation of the works of Shakespeare, by his son François, but it throws more light upon the author of "*Hernani*" than upon that of "*Hamlet*." The other exile

productions were "*Les Travailleurs de la Mer*" in 1866 and "*L'Homme qui Rit*" in 1869.

During the Franco-Prussian war Victor Hugo returned to Paris. His reception was almost delirious, but the poet brought no strength for the conflict, and in politics his influence can not be called good. At last he gave himself again to literature and social life, in which he shone by a great kindness of heart. His "*Quatre-vingt Treize*" is from this period. He published also at this time the second and third parts of "*La Légende des Siècles*," which paints the advancing march of humanity to higher things, and "*L'Art d'être Grand-père*," which contains some of the most delightful lyrics upon childhood to be found in French literature—few poets have put more love for children into verses. He died in 1885 in his beloved city, Paris, was honored by a national funeral, and buried in the Pantheon.

Victor Hugo was undoubtedly a remarkable man, and, with all his chauvinism, one who loved humanity. Though he flattered too much the Parisians and his countrymen, his great underlying impulse is humanitarian. He had the interest of the toilers at heart, and pleaded their cause more eloquently than ever Carlyle or Ruskin did. He had such a high regard for the sacredness of human life that he made noble efforts to protect it against economic greed and from capital punishment. Of easy access to all, he welcomed every form of disinterested philanthropy. He considered the vocation of a poet to be that of an apostle, a prophet, a leader of souls, a voice for the voiceless. The poet is not so much the seer of the beautiful as the servant of the true and the good. It is unfortunate that in practice the ideal remained so much above the reality. Still, notwithstanding the limitations of vanity, and sometimes ignorance, he deserves the great place which he has taken

in the history of letters as a satirist, a novelist, a dramatist, and a poet.

As a satirist his work will hardly last—first, because of the vein of coarseness and vulgarity which it contains, and, second, because it lacks elements of truth which make works enduring. He did some of his best work as a novelist. "*Notre Dame*," largely inspired by Walter Scott, has pages which none but a great poet could have written. "*Les Misérables*," the worst constructed novel in the French language, is one of the greatest. It has sometimes the elevation of a great epic. Jean Valjean is an incomparable character, a living conscience, and one of the finest creations of literature. Not to speak of his other novels, his "*Quatre-vingt Treize*" is a striking interpretation of heroic life during the French revolution.

As a dramatist he went to extremes, which were to be expected on the part of a reformer. His dramatic personages are bold, unusual, and æsthetic characters—Hernani, the brigand and nobleman; Ruy Blas, prime minister and servant—are fair examples. His plays give a large place to the horrible in life; they are uneven in their merits, but the most rigid elimination of unworthy ones must give him credit for "*Hernani*," "*Marion Delorme*," and "*Ruy Blas*," as among the greatest dramas produced in France for two centuries. The celebrated monologue of Don Carlos in "*Hernani*" is one of the finest fragments of French epics, and a vigorous philosophy of history. Good and indifferent, his plays have done much to break down the artificial character of old French dramatic rules.

As a poet his dominant characteristic is an extraordinary originality and power of expression. His metaphors are rich symbols—widely comprehending symbols—which give bold relief to his thought. These metaphors he changes constantly and he repeats them, Hebrew fashion,



HUGO AT HIS WORK.

with great cumulative force. He often lacks measure, resorts to great exaggerations; but this is the result of his irrepressible imagination never controlled by facts or by

reason. He touches all the chords of our nature except the simpler ones, and his disposition to magnify the dreadful often makes him fatiguing. Still, he is superb when he deals with human sufferings, though he lacks naturalness. His style is remarkable and his rhythm sonorous and musical. No French writer has so modified the French language. Whether he adopted the lyrical strain or the epic mood, Hugo was a great poet, capable of a wide range of themes, of great visions, but relatively poor in ideas. He voiced admirably the thought of his times and of his countrymen, not as a scientist—he knew no science—nor as a speculative thinker, but as a seer. While he frequently changed his most fundamental opinions, he always sang worthily of God, of the soul, of the hereafter, of brotherhood, of progress and human perfectibility. God and conscience never were metaphors for him, but the great realities in an age when courage was required to assert one's positive religious convictions. While time will doubtless make great havoc in the gigantic work of Hugo, much will survive, because it expresses the deepest needs of the human soul, and the undying hopes which sustain it in the discipline of life.

JEAN CHARLEMAGNE BRACQ.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Lamartine was a noble dreamer in practical affairs, and just ideas formed a portion of his dreams. Nature had made him an irreclaimable optimist; all that is base and ugly in life passed out of view as he soared above



earth in his luminous ether. Sadness and doubt indeed he knew, but his sadness had a charm of its own, and there were consolations in maternal nature, in love, in religious faith and adoration. His power of vision was not intense or keen, his descriptions are commonly vague or pale; but no one could mirror more faithfully a state of feeling divested of all material circumstance. The pure and ample harmonies of his verse do not attack the ear, but they penetrate to the soul. All the great lyric themes—God, nature, death, glory, melancholy, solitude, regret, desire, hope, love—he interpreted on his instrument with a musician's inspiration. Unhappily he lacked the steadfast force of will, the inexhaustible patience, which go to make a complete artist; he improvised admirably; he refused to labor as a master of technique; hence his diffuseness, his negligences; hence the decline of his powers after the first spontaneous inspiration was exhausted.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

## II.

There had always been a strong minority who held more or less to the classical models of tradition, and these naturally had never forgiven Hugo. His political extravagances had alienated from him a certain portion of his old adherents; while the larger part had come, if not to neo-classicism, to a crotchety kind of "preciousness," which regarded his effects as garish, his workmanship as wanting in distinction, his innovations in prosody as half-hearted and unsystematic. All this, together with the mere fickleness which is found in most nations, and in the French most of all, combined to depreciate Hugo in the current speech and writing of literature, though his works are not believed to have lost their sale, and though he retains somewhat more than a faithful few among critical admirers.—SAINTSBURY.

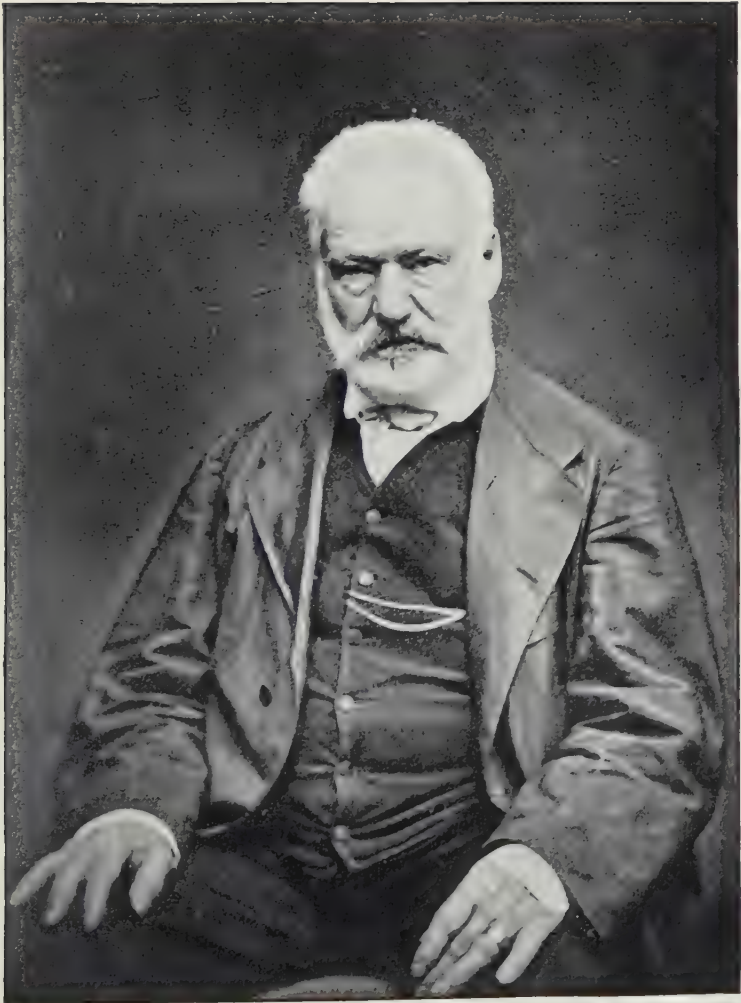


## III.

Victor Hugo is more than an ancestor; he is also in a certain sense a primitive. He is inspired by the most general sentiments, those which reside at the basis of the human soul. Gifted with a powerful organization, yet capable of both grace and sweetness—to witness, many pages of exquisite delicacy—he is quite inapt in those quintessences of the heart so curiously illustrated in many of the poets of our times. He has been accused of grossness of soul; he possesses a great soul, open wide to all generous inspirations, impregnated with love and pity, vibrating at the slightest breath and brightening with the first gleam. Indeed, if we find in him neither finical affectations nor subtle refinements it is because a robust man can not be as sensitive as one who is abnormally developed. In condemning him for what our keenest critics call the commonplaces of sentiment they also accuse him of ordinary thoughts. They extol the wonderful craftsman in style, the sovereign master of the verb, but find that his marvelous form covers but little substance, and pretend that the god of imagery and rhythm is but a mediocre thinker. Let us not overlook what is artless in his imposing antitheses, rudimentary in his conception of things, incomplete, excessively foreshortened, and sometimes radically false in his historical views, or what is either too simple in his formulas, or contradictory in the various philosophies which he has successively interpreted. Victor Hugo is not a philosopher. His imagination grasps great systems in order to transform them into poetic myths. One should not smile on hearing him called a magician; that is, indeed, his true name.—PELLISSIER.

## IV.

The three greatest French poets of the nineteenth century are Lamartine, Hugo and Musset. The first one touches us deeply by his harmonious and simple



Victor Hugo



verses, the second impresses us with the force of his genius, and the third is sometimes light and gay, and sometimes intensely passionate and sad. Musset was highly nervous and sensitive; he lacked Lamartine's spirit of patriotism and Hugo's well-balanced mind.—  
ALCÉE FORTIER.

## V.

Edmond About, a very lively writer, whose liveliness was not always kept sufficiently in check by good taste, oscillated between fiction and journalism, latterly inclining chiefly to journalism. In his younger days he was better known as a novelist, and some of his works, such as "*Tolla*" (1855) and "*Le Roi des Montagnes*," were very popular.—SAINTSBURY,

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM LAMARTINE.

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THE STORY OF GRAZIELLA.

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*From "Lamartine's Confidential Disclosures" ("Les Confidences").*

Andrea and his wife were alone on the *astrico*. They welcomed me with friendly warmth, and overwhelmed me with friendly reproaches for my prolonged absence. They related to me all their troubles and all their hopes with regard to Graziella.

"If you had been here," said Andrea to me, "you, whom she loves so dearly, and to whom she could never say no, you would have helped us greatly. How glad we are to see you again! To-morrow the betrothing takes place; you must be present; your presence has always brought us good fortune."

When I heard these words, I felt a shudder crawl over every part of my body. Something told me that I would be the cause of their misfortune. I burned and I trembled to see Graziella again. I affected to speak in a loud tone to her grandparents, and to pass backward and forward in front of her door, like someone who does not wish to call, but who is anxious to be heard. She remained both deaf and dumb, and did not appear. I entered my chamber and went to bed. A certain tranquillity—such as is always produced by the cessation of doubt in the soul that was agitated, and the certainty of anything, even of misery—at length came over my mind. I fell upon my couch like an inanimate and motionless mass. Lassitude of mind and body soon threw me into the midst of confused dreams, then into the total forgetfulness of sleep.

\* \* \*

I almost awoke two or three times during the night. It was one of those winter nights which are more rare and more dread-

ful in warm climates, and on the borders of the sea, than elsewhere. The lightning flashed uninterruptedly through the cracks in my window-shutters, and played like the blinkings of an eye of fire on the walls of my room. The winds howled like packs of famished dogs. The dull blows of a heavy sea on the beach made the whole coast ring as if it were being pelted with enormous rocks.

The breath of the wind made my door tremble and rattle. Two or three times I fancied that it opened and shut of its own accord, and that I heard smothered cries and human sobs mingled with the whistling and moaning of the tempest. I even thought, at one time, that I heard words and my name, pronounced by a voice which sounded like that of a person in distress, calling for help! I started up in my bed; I heard nothing more; I supposed that the tempest, the fever, and my dreams still haunted me with their illusions; I fell back and slumbered again.

The morning's cloudless sun had put the tempest to flight. I was awakened by real sobs, and by the screams of despair of the aged fisherman and his wife, who were venting their lamentations on the threshold of Graziella's chamber. The poor little thing had stolen away in the night. She had got up and kissed the children, motioning them to be silent. On her bed she had left her finest clothes, her earrings, her necklaces, and the small sum of money she possessed.

The father held in his hand a piece of paper, blotted with drops of water, which they had found fastened to the bedclothes with a pin. On this paper there were five or six lines of writing which he wildly implored me to read. I took it from his hand. It only contained these words, tremulously penned in the height of fever, and which I found some difficulty in reading:

"I have promised too much . . . a voice tells me that it is more than I can perform. . . . I kiss your feet. Forgive me. I prefer to make myself a nun. Console Cecho and the *gentleman*. . . . I will pray to God for him and for the little ones. Give them all that I have. Restore the ring to Cecho. . . ."

When these lines were read, the whole family again burst into tears. The little children, still in their night-clothes, hearing that their sister had gone away forever, mingled their cries with the moans of the old people, and ran all over the house calling *Graziella!*

The note fell from my hands. Stooping to pick it up, I saw on the floor, beneath the door of my own room, a full-blown pomegranate flower which I had admired in the young girl's hair on the preceding Sunday, and the little devotional medal which she always wore in her bosom, and which, during my illness, four months before, she had fastened to my bed-curtains. I no longer doubted that my door had really been opened and closed during the night; that the words and sobs, which I had fancied I had heard, and had taken for the wailing of the winds, were the farewell words and sobs of the poor child. A dry place on the outer part of the threshold of my room, in the midst of the traces of the storm which were visible on all the other parts of the terrace, attested that the young girl had rested there during the tempest—that she had spent her last hour in tears and lamentations either lying or kneeling on that stone. I snatched up the pomegranate flower and the medal, and hid them in my breast.

The poor people, even in the midst of their own distress, were affected by the sight of my tears flowing with theirs. I did all I could to console them. It was agreed that if they found their daughter again they would never speak to her again about Cecho. Poor Cecho himself, in quest of whom Beppo had gone, was the first to offer himself up as a sacrifice to the peace of the family, and for the return of his cousin. Wretched as he was, it was easy to perceive that he was happy that his name had been mentioned with kindness in the note, and that he found a sort of consolation in the words of farewell which were the cause of his despair.

"She thought of me, at any rate," said he, wiping away his tears.

It was instantly covenanted between us that none of us would taste a moment's repose until after we had discovered the traces of the fugitive.

Andrea and Cecho set out in haste to make inquiries at the innumerable convents in the city. Beppo and the grandam ran to the houses of all of those of Graziella's young female companions to whom they suspected she had confided her thoughts and the plan of her flight. I, being a stranger, took upon myself to scour the quays, the wharves of Naples, and the gates of the city, to question the guards, the captains of vessels, the boatmen,



and ascertain whether any of them had seen the young *Procidana* leave the town that morning.

The morning was spent in bootless searches. We returned to the house silently and mournfully, to relate to one another the steps we had taken, and to consult anew. No one, except the children, had the courage to taste even a bit of bread. Andrea and his wife seated themselves dejectedly on the threshold of Graziella's room. Beppino and Cecho hopelessly resumed their wanderings through the streets and in the churches, which are opened at eve in Naples for the litanies and benedictions.

\* \* \*

After they had gone, I sallied forth alone, and mournfully and unthinkingly took the road which leads to the grotto of Posilipo. I passed through the grotto; I went as far as the border of the sea which bathes the little isle of Nisida.

From the shore, my eyes turned towards Procida, which you can see from that spot rising like a tortoise-shell above the blue waves. My thoughts naturally followed the direction of my eyes, and fixed themselves on that isle, and turned to those pleasant days which I had there spent with Graziella. It was inspiration which guided me toward it. I remembered that, on the island, Graziella had a friend of about her own age, the daughter of a poor dweller in one of the neighboring cottages; that this young girl wore a peculiar dress unlike the costume worn by her companions. One day, when I was questioning her about the reason of this difference in her garments, she told me that she was a nun, although she lived in freedom with her parents, in a sort of intermediary state between cloisteral and secular life. She also showed me the chapel of her convent. There were several establishments of this kind on the island, as well as in Ischia and in the villages around Naples.

The thought struck me that Graziella's wish to devote herself to God had probably induced her to apply to this friend and ask her to introduce her into her convent. Ere I had taken time to reflect, I was already walking rapidly along the road to Pozzuoli, the town nearest Procida at which boats are to be found.

I reached Pozzuoli in less than an hour, I rushed to the port to induce two boatmen to row me to Procida, despite the heavy sea and approaching darkness. I paid them double. They launched their bark. I seized a pair of oars to aid them. We doubled Cape

Miseno with difficulty. Two hours afterward, I landed on the island, and, trembling and panting for breath, I ascended alone, amid the darkness and the blasts of winter, the steps of the long flight which led to Andrea's cabin.

\* \* \*

"If Graziella is on the island," I said to myself, "that is the first place she has visited, moved by that natural instinct which leads the bird toward its nest, and the child toward its father's dwelling. Even if she is no longer there, she will have left some trace of her passage through the place. These tracks will perhaps lead me to her. If I neither find her nor any trace of her there, all hope is lost: the doors of some living sepulchre have forever closed upon her youth."

Agitated by this terrible doubt, I scaled the last flight of the stairs. I knew the situation of the cleft in the rock in which the old mother had hid the key of the house, at the time of our departure from the island. I pushed aside the ivy and buried my hand in the fissure. My fingers sought for the key, trembling lest they should feel the bit of cold iron which would have robbed me of all hope. . . .

The key was not there. I smothered an exclamation of joy which arose to my lips, and entered the yard with noiseless steps. The door and the window-shutters were closed; a small ray of light which leaked through the crack beneath the door, and danced on the leaves of the fig-tree, however, indicated that there was a light burning within. Who but the fisherman's granddaughter could have found the key, entered the house, and lighted the lamp? All my doubts vanished: I felt certain that Graziella was at two paces' distance from me and I fell upon my knees on the steps in front of the house, to thank the angel that had conducted me to her.

\* \* \*

No sound proceeded from the house. I pressed my ear against the door near the sill; I thought I heard the feeble sound of breathing and of sobs, coming from the back of the second room. I rattled the door gently, as if it had merely been shaken on its hinges by the wind, in order to attract Graziella's attention by degrees, and not to startle her by the sudden and unexpected noise of a human voice, and, perhaps, kill her by calling her. The breathing ceased. I then called Graziella in a low tone, and with

the most tranquil and tender accent I could find in my heart. A feeble cry responded from the back part of the house.

I again called, conjuring her to open the door to her friend, her brother, who had come alone, in the gloom of night, through the tempest, guided by his good genius, to seek for her, find her, and tear her from her despair—to bring her the forgiveness of her family, and his own pardon, and lead her back to duty, to happiness, to her poor old grandmother and her dear little brothers!

“God! it is he! I hear my name! It is his voice!” cried she in hollow tones.

I called her more tenderly, *Graziellina*, by that name of endearment which I sometimes gave her when we toyed together.

“Oh! yes, it is indeed he,” said she. “I am not deceived; my God! it is he.”

I heard her rise from the dry leaves, which rustled beneath her at every movement she made, and advance a few steps to come and admit me; then fall back again, unable to move, either from weakness or emotion.

\* \* \*

I no longer hesitated; I dashed my shoulder against the old door with all the force of my impatience and anxiety; the lock yielded to the pressure and I rushed into the house.

The little lamp in front of the Madonna, which had been lighted by Graziella, shed its feeble rays around. I darted into the second room, where I had heard her speak and fall, and where I thought she had swooned. I was mistaken; she had not fainted. Her weakness alone had betrayed her efforts; she had fallen back upon the heap of dry furze which served her as a bed, where she now lay with her hands tightly clasped and her eyes fixed on me. These, animated by fever, distended by astonishment, made languid by love, sparkled like two fixed stars darting their beams from heaven and yet seeming to shine from the depths of waters.

Her head, which she sought to raise, fell back from weakness upon the leaves, and remained in a prostrate position as if severed from the trunk by the axe. With the exception of two bright roseate spots on her cheek-bones, her features were as pale as if their owner were at the point of death. Her beautiful skin was stained with the traces of tears on which the dust had settled. Her black garments were hardly distinguishable from the brown hue of the leaves on which she lay. Her naked feet, white as

snow, overshot the heap of furze beneath her, and rested on the cold stone. Chills ran through all her limbs, and made her teeth chatter like castanets in the hands of a child. The red handkerchief which usually confined the long black tresses of her beautiful hair was loose, and hung like a veil over her brow down to her very eyelids. It was easy to see that she had used it to hide her face and her tears in darkness, as in the anticipated immobility of a shroud, and that she had only raised it when she heard the sound of my voice, and attempted to get up and come to admit me.

\* \* \*

I threw myself upon my knees beside the bed of furze; I took both her icy hands within my own; I raised them to my lips to warm them with my breath; a few tears trickled down my cheeks and fell upon them. I knew, by the convulsive pressure of her fingers, that she felt this shower of the heart, and that she thanked me for it. I stripped off my sailor's wrapper. I threw it over her feet. I folded them in the woolen garment.

She submitted to all this, merely watching my movements the while with an expression of ecstatic delirium, but wholly unable to help herself by the least movement; like a child permitting itself to be swathed and turned in its cradle. I then cast two or three dry fagots on the hearth in the front room, to disseminate a little warmth in the air. I ignited them with the flame of the lamp, and returned to my post on the floor beside the couch of leaves.

"I feel well," said she to me, speaking in a tone of voice that was low, soft, even, and monotonous, as if her breast had completely lost its vibration and its accent at the same time, and as if her voice had only retained one single note. "I have in vain sought to hide it from myself—I have in vain sought to hide it forever from thee. I may die, but thou art the only one that I can ever love. They wished to betroth me to another; thou art the one to whom my soul is betrothed! I will never give myself to another on earth, for I have already secretly given myself to thee! To thee on earth, or to God in Heaven! that is the vow I made the first day I discovered that my heart was sick for thee! I well know that I am only a poor girl, unworthy to touch thy feet even in thought; therefore have I never asked thee to love me. I never will ask thee if thou dost love me. But I—I love thee, I love thee, I love thee!" And she seemed to concentrate her whole soul in those three words. "Now, despise me, mock me, spurn

me with thy feet! Laugh at me, if thou wilt, as a mad thing who fancies she is a queen in the midst of her tatters. Hold me up to the scorn of the whole world—yes, I will tell them with my own lips—‘Yes, I love him! And had you been in my place, you would have done as I have—you would have loved him or have died!’”

\* \* \*

I had kept my eyes averted, not daring to fix them on her, lest my glance should say too much, or too little, in reply to such wild delirium. At these words, however, I raised my head which had been resting on her hands, and tried to stammer an answer.

She placed one of her fingers on my lips.

“Let me tell thee all; now I am contented; my doubts are gone; God has disclosed himself. Listen: Yesterday, when I fled from the house after having spent the night in struggles and tears at thy door; when I arrived here in the midst of the tempest, I came with the belief that I should never more see thee—I came like a dead woman walking of her own accord to her grave. I was to have made myself a nun to-morrow at the break of day. When I landed at night on the island, and knocked at the door of the convent, it was too late; the door was closed. They refused to open it for me. I came hither to spend the night, and kiss the walls of my father’s house before I entered the walls of the house of God and the tomb of my heart. I had written to a friend to come for me to-morrow, and sent the note to her by a little boy—I took the key. I lighted the lamp in front of the Madonna. I threw myself upon my knees, and made a wish—a last wish—a wish of hope even in the depths of despair. For, if ever thou lovest, thou’lt know that there always is a last glimmering of light at the bottom of the soul, even when it is thought that all life had fled. ‘Holy protectress,’ said I, ‘send me a sign of my vocation, to convince me that love does not deceive me, and that I really devote to God a life which should belong to Him alone! My last night amongst the living has already commenced. No one knows where it is spent. To-morrow, perhaps, search will be made for me, here, after I am gone. If the friend to whom I have sent word comes the first, that will be a sign that I must accomplish my design, and I will follow her to the convent forever. But if *he* should appear before her! . . . if *he* should come, guided by my protecting angel, to seek me and arrest my steps on the very brink of my other life! . . . Oh! then, that would

be a sign that you do not want me, and that I must return with him to love him all the rest of my days! Let him be the first to come!' added I. 'Perform this single miracle, if such is your will, and God's decree. To obtain it, I will make you a gift—the only one that I, who have nothing, can make. Here are my tresses, my poor, long tresses, which are loved by him, and which he has often playfully cast loose, to see them float in the wind on my shoulders. Take them—I give them to you; I will cut them off with my own hands, to prove to you that I do not spare myself, and in order that my head may undergo, in advance, the operation that would deprive me of them to-morrow, and at the same time separate me from the world.' "

Saying this, she raised her left hand and removed the silken kerchief which covered her head, while with the other she grasped the mass of her dissevered hair, which lay beside her on the leafy couch, and unrolled it before my eyes.

"The Madonna has performed the miracle," resumed she, in a louder tone of voice, and with an accent of extreme joy. "She has sent thee! I will follow thee wherever thou wilt. My tresses belong to her. My life is thine."

I threw myself upon the mutilated locks of her beauteous black hair, and they remained in my hands like a dead branch torn from the tree. I covered them with mute kisses, I pressed them against my heart, I deluged them with tears, as if they had been a portion of herself deprived of life, that I was burying in the earth. Then, turning toward her again, I saw her charming despoiled head, as if adorned and beautified by her very sacrifice, beam with joy and love in the midst of the black and uneven remains of her hair. It appeared to me like the mutilated statue of Youth, whose grace and beauty the very ravages of time heighten, by adding sorrow to admiration. This profanation of herself, this suicide of her beauty for the love of me, struck a blow at my heart which shook my whole being and made me prostrate myself at her feet. I then had a foreboding of what love is, and I mistook that foreboding for love itself.

\* \* \*

Alas! it was not real love, it was but its shadow in my heart. But I was too young and too ingenuous not to be deceived by it myself. I thought that I adored her as so much innocence, beauty, and love deserved to be adored by a lover. I told her so, with that



accent of sincerity which emotion imparts; with that impassioned restraint which is imparted by solitude, darkness, despair, and tears. She believed it because she required that belief to live, and because she had enough passion in her own heart to make up for its insufficiency in a thousand other hearts.

The whole night was thus spent in the confiding but ingenuous and pure intercourse of two beings who innocently disclose their affection to one another, and who wish that night and silence may be eternal, in order that nothing indifferent to them may interpose itself between their lips and their hearts. Her piety and my timid reserve, the very tenderness of our souls, guarded us from all other dangers. The veil of our tears hung over us. There is nothing so far removed from sensuality as tender emotion. The abuse of such an intercourse would have been the profanation of two souls.

I held both her hands clasped within my own. I felt the glow of life return to them. I went and brought her some fresh water in the hollow of my hand to quench her thirst, or to wash her brow and cheeks. I fed the fire with a few dry branches; then I returned, and resealed myself on the stone beside the fagot of myrtle on which her head reposed, to hear and hear again the delightful disclosures of her love; how it had grown in her breast without her knowledge, under the semblance of a sister's pure and sweet friendship; how she had at first felt fear, then taken heart; by what signs she had at length discovered that she loved me; how many marks of preference she had secretly given me without my knowledge; the day on which she thought she had betrayed herself; the day on which she fancied I returned her love; the hours, the gesture, the smiles, the words heedlessly uttered and eagerly remembered; the involuntary revelations or clouds of both our countenances, during those six months. Her memory reminded her of everything; it had retained the imprint of everything, as the dry grass on the mountains of the South, when ignited by the wind during the summer, retains the imprint of the fire's ravages on all the spots over which the flames have swept.

\* \* \*

To these confessions she added those mysterious superstitions which give a meaning and a value to the most insignificant circumstance. The veils which covered her soul, so to speak, were thus raised by her, one by one, before my eyes. She showed me



that soul as she would have shown it to God, in all the nakedness of its candor, innocence, and boundless trust. Once in a lifetime, only, does the soul know those moments in which it casts its whole self into another soul with that inexhaustible murmur from lips which are inadequate to its outpourings of love, and which at length stammer sounds that are inarticulate and confused, like the kisses of infants falling asleep.

I listened, sighed, and shuddered by turns with untiring delight. Although my too frivolous and youthful heart was neither sufficiently ripe nor sufficiently fruitful to produce, of itself, such burning and divine emotions; those emotions, showered upon it by another heart, produced such a novel and delightful sensation, that I fancied, as I felt them, they were my own. But no! I was ice, she was fire. I thought that I produced what I merely reflected. It mattered not; that reverberation from one to another seemed to belong to us both and to wrap us in the atmosphere of the same feeling.

\* \* \*

Thus flew by this long winter night. And yet to her and me it seemed not as long as the first sigh which reveals a lover's passion. When dawn appeared, it seemed to us that it came to interrupt the word that our lips had hardly commenced to utter.

And yet the sun had risen high above the horizon ere its rays stole between the closed shutters and made the light of the lamp grow pale. Just as I opened the door, I saw all the fisherman's family climbing the steps in hot haste.

The young nun of Procida, to whom Graziella had written and confessed her intention to enter the convent that morning, suspecting the cause of her despair, had sent her brother during the night to Naples, to warn Graziella's relatives of her determination. Informed in this manner of their child's hiding-place, they had set out, with joy and repentance in their hearts, to arrest her on the brink of a living tomb, and bring her back, free and forgiven, to her home.

The grandam fell upon her knees beside the couch of leaves, pushing forward with both her arms the two children, that she had brought with her to soften her granddaughter's heart, and shielding herself from her reproaches behind their bodies. The little ones, with screams and tears, threw themselves upon their sister's bosom. As Graziella raised herself to fondle her brothers

and kiss her grandmother, the silken kerchief fell back and disclosed to view her head shorn of its covering. At the sight of this outrage on her beauty, whose meaning to them was but too plain, they shuddered. Their moans again rang through the house. The nun, who entered at that moment, quieted and consoled everybody; she picked up the locks which had been severed from Graziella's brow; she touched the image of the Virgin with them, as she wrapped them in a white silken handkerchief; then placed them in the extended apron of the fisherman's old wife.

"Keep them," said she, "to show them to her, now and then, in her joy and in her sorrow, and to remind her when she gives herself to the one she loves, that the first fruits of her heart should always belong to God; as the first fruits of her beauty belong to Him in these tresses."

\* \* \*

In the evening we all returned together to Naples. The zeal which I had shown in my searches for Graziella, and in my efforts to save her, greatly increased the affection of the old woman and the fisherman for me. No one suspected the nature of the interest I bore her, or of her attachment to me. Her repugnance to the proposed marriage was attributed wholly to the deformity of Cecho. They hoped that reflection and time would overcome that repugnance. They promised Graziella never again to press her to marry. Cecho, himself, entreated his father not to mention the subject again; his humility, his manner toward her, and his glances, seemed to implore his cousin's forgiveness for having been the cause of her grief. Tranquillity again entered the house.

\* \* \*

There was nothing now to cast a shade over the features of Graziella, or over her happiness, unless it was the thought that that happiness would sooner or later be interrupted by my return to my native land. Whenever the name of France happened to be mentioned, the poor girl became pale, as if horrified by the sight of the phantom of death. One day, on entering my chamber, I found all my citizen's clothes torn to pieces and scattered about the floor.

"Forgive me!" said Graziella, falling upon her knees at my feet and turning her distorted features toward me. "I am the author of this *misfortune*. Oh! do not reprove me! All that reminds me that thou must one of these days throw off these sailor's

garments pains me too much! It seems to me that thou'lt cast away thy present heart with these humble clothes, and assume a different one with thy fine attire of former times."

With the exception of these little storms, which only burst from the fiery clouds of her affection, and which were washed away by a few tears from our eyes, three months slipped away in an imaginary felicity which the first touch of reality was to destroy. Our Eden rested on a cloud.

And thus was it that I was first made acquainted with love:—by a tear in the eyes of a child.

\* \* \*

One night, toward the end of May, I heard a violent knocking at the door. Everyone was asleep. I went and opened. It was my friend V——.

"I come for thee," said he to me. "Here is a letter from thy mother. Thou'lt not resist it. Horses are ordered for midnight. It is just eleven. Let us set out, or thou'lt never leave this place. It will kill thy mother. Thou knowest how thy family casts the responsibility of all thy faults on her. She has made so many sacrifices for thy sake, sacrifice thyself a moment for hers. I swear to thee that I will return and spend the winter and another long year with thee here. But thou must show thyself at home and perform this act of obedience to thy mother's commands."

I felt that I was lost.

"Wait for me here," said I.

I returned to my chamber, I hurriedly threw my clothes into a portmanteau, I wrote to Graziella; I told her all that love could wring from a heart of twenty, all that reason could dictate to a son devoted to his mother. I swore to her, as sincerely as I swore to myself, that ere the fourth month had passed away, I would be by her side, and that I would hardly ever leave her again. I intrusted the uncertainty of our fate to Providence and love. I left her my purse to relieve the wants of her aged grandparents during my absence. After closing the letter, I left my chamber on tiptoe. I cast myself upon my knees before her door. I kissed the stone, the wood; I slipped the note into her room beneath the door. I smothered the inward sob which almost smothered me.

My friend placed his hand under my arm, raised me from the floor, and tried to drag me away. At that very moment, Graziella,

startled and alarmed, no doubt, by the unusual noise, opened her chamber-door. The moon shone brilliantly on the terrace. The poor child recognized my friend and saw my portmanteau, which a servant was carrying away on his shoulder. She stretched out her arms, sent forth a cry of terror, and fell senseless upon the terrace.

We sprang toward her. We bore her lifeless form back to her bed. All the family rushed to the spot. They threw water in her face. They called her in all the tones that were dearest to her. She returned to consciousness only at the sound of my voice.

"Thou seest she lives," whispered my friend in my ear; "the blow has fallen. A longer farewell would only be adding to its torture."

He tore the young girl's icy arms from about my neck, and dragged me out of the house. An hour afterward we were rolling in the silence and gloom of night along the road to Rome.

\* \* \*

In the letter which I had written to Graziella, I had given her several directions. At Milan I found a first letter from her. She told me that she was well in body, but that her heart was sick; that she nevertheless placed her trust in my word, and would confidently expect me toward the month of November.

When I reached Lyons, I found another, which spoke with still more serenity and security. It contained a few leaves of the carnation which grew in an earthen vase on the little breast-wall of the terrace, close by my chamber, and one of whose flowers she used to stick in her hair every Sunday. Was this to send me something that she had touched? Was it a tender reproach disguised beneath a symbol, and designed to tell me that she had sacrificed her tresses for my sake?

She said to me that she "had had the fever; that her heart was sore but that she was getting better every day; that they had sent her, for a change of air, and for her entire recovery to the house of one of her cousins, Cecho's sister—situated on the *Vomero*, a high and salubrious hill which overlooks Naples.

After this, I remained about five months without receiving any letters. My thoughts daily dwelt on Graziella. I was to set out again for Italy in the beginning of the following winter. Her sorrowful and charming image appeared to me there like a regret, and sometimes even like a gentle reproach. I was at that

ungrateful period of life when frivolity and imitation make a young man feel a false shame in the best feelings of his nature; a cruel age, at which the most beautiful of God's gifts—pure love, ingenuous affection—fall into the dust, and are swept away in their bloom by the wind of the world. The false and ironical pride of my friends often struggled in my breast with the affection which lay hid at the bottom of my heart. I would not have dared to confess without blushing and exposing myself to raillery—the name and station of the object of my regret and sadness. Graziella was not forgotten, but she was veiled in my life. That love which entranced my heart humiliated my vanity. Her memory, which I only nourished in my heart when alone, pursued me almost like a remorse when I mingled with the world. How I blush now for having blushed then! and how much more precious was one of the joy-beams or one of the teardrops of her chaste eyes, than all the glances, all the allurements, all the smiles for which I was about to sacrifice her image! Ah! man, when he is too young, can not love! He knows not the value of anything! He only knows what real happiness is after he has lost it! There is more wild sap, more floating shade in the young trees of the forest; there is more fire in the old heart of the oak.

True love is the ripe fruit of life. At twenty it is not known, it is imagined. In vegetable nature, when the fruit comes, the leaves fall; perhaps is this also the case in human nature. I have often thought so since I have found white hairs in my head. I have reproached myself for not having then known the value of that flower of love. I was nought but vanity; and vanity is the most silly and the most cruel vice of all, for it makes happiness blush! . . .

\* \* \*

One night in the early part of November, on my return from a ball, some one handed me a note and a packet, which a traveler, coming from Naples, had brought to me from the posthouse at Macon, where he had stopped to change horses. The stranger's note said, that being intrusted by one of his friends—the superintendent of a coral manufactory at Naples—with an important message for me, he had acquitted himself of his charge as he passed through Macon; but that as the intelligence of which he was the bearer was sad and funereal, he would not ask to see me;

he merely requested me to acknowledge the reception of the packet at Paris.

I opened the bundle with trembling hands. Beneath the first wrapper I found a letter from Graziella, which only contained these words:

"The doctor says that I shall die in less than three days. I wish to say farewell to thee ere I lose all my strength. Oh! if I had thee near me I would live! But it is God's will. I will soon speak to thee, and forever, from on high. Love my soul! It shall be with thee as long as thou livest. I leave thee my tresses, which were cut off for thy sake one night. Consecrate them to God in some chapel in thy own land, that something belonging to me may be near thee!"

\* \* \*

I was overwhelmed, annihilated! I remained so, with her letter clasped in my hand, until daybreak. Then, and then only, did I find courage to open the other envelope. It contained all her beautiful hair, just as it was on the night when she showed it to me in the cabin. To it were still attached some of the leaves of the furze which had got entangled in it on that night. I complied with the order contained in her dying behest. From that day forward a shadow of her death spread itself over my features and over my youth.

Twelve years afterward I returned to Naples. I searched for traces. There was not one to be found either at *la Margellina* or on the island of Procida. The little house above the cliff had fallen to ruins. All that was left of it was a heap of gray stones above a storeroom, in which the goatherds sheltered their flocks when it rained. Time effaces quickly from the earth; but it never obliterates the traces of a first love from the heart that has passed over that earth.

Poor Graziella! Many days have flown by since those days. I have loved, I have been loved. Other rays of beauty and affection have illumined my gloomy path. Other souls have opened themselves for me, to reveal to me in the hearts of women the most mysterious treasures of beauty, sanctity, and purity that God ever animated on earth, to make us understand, foretaste, and desire Heaven; but nothing has dimmed thy first apparition in my heart. The longer I have lived the closer have I approached to thee in thought. Thy memory is like those lights of thy father's

boat, which distance frees from all smoke, and which sparkle the brighter the farther they recede from us. I know not where slumber thy mortal remains, nor whether anyone now mourns for thee in thy native land; but thy real sepulchre is in my soul. There, every part of thee is gathered and entombed. Thy name never strikes my ear in vain. I love the language in which it is uttered. At the bottom of my heart there is always a warm tear which filters, drop by drop, and secretly falls upon thy memory, to refresh it and embalm it within me.

(1829.)



## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM HUGO.

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### *THE DEMON CARRONADE.*

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*From "Ninety-Three."*

Boisberthelot had not the time to make any answer to Vieuville, for the words that he was about to utter were cut short by a cry of despair; and at the same time an awful crash, such as seldom strikes upon the ear, was heard. This cry and this crash came from the interior of the vessel.

The captain and the lieutenant rushed to the companion ladder leading to the lower deck, but were unable to descend, owing to the upward rush of frightened gunners and seamen.

Something very terrible had just taken place.

One of the carronades, a twenty-four pounder, had broken loose from its lashings.

This is perhaps one of the most terrible mishaps that can happen on board a man-of-war when it is in full sail in the open sea.

When a gun breaks away from its lashings, it becomes, to a certain extent, an indescribably supernatural animal. It is a machine which has the power of transforming itself into a monster.

This enormous mass darts about on its wheels, and runs like a billiard ball on a table, rolls as the vessel rolls, pitches as it pitches, stands stock still, and appears to meditate its next movement, resumes its mad rushes again, flies like an arrow from one end of the vessel to another, turns on its center, conceals itself, escapes its pursuers, rears on end, crashes, smashes, kills, and massacres all around it. It is a battering-ram that strikes the wall according to its own fantasy, and to this add, that in this case the battering-ram is of iron and the wall of wood. It is brute matter

set at liberty—it seems as if the slave of the ages were taking its revenge.

It appears as if all the hidden wickedness that lies concealed in what we term inanimate objects has burst forth, and freed itself from all restraint. It seems to have passed the bounds of patience, and to be taking a weird kind of revenge.

The rabid mass makes springs like those of a panther, it possesses the enormous power of the elephant, the agility of the mouse, the quickness of the hatchet, the unforeseen rushes of the waves, the strokes of the lightning, and the deafness of the tomb. It weighs ten thousand pounds, and rebounds like the india-rubber ball of a child. The bewildering whirls are abruptly cut off at right angles: and what can be done with it, how put an end to its movements? A storm sinks into a calm, a cyclone fades away, a wind dies by degrees, a broken mast can be replaced, a leak stopped, a fire burns itself out, but what can be done with this gigantic bronze creature? Which is the way to begin with it? You can cow a dog, paralyze a bull, fascinate a serpent, terrify a tiger, and soften the noble heart of a lion, but what can you do with such a monster as a gun that has broken away from its fastenings? You can not kill it—for it is dead, whilst at the same time it lives. It lives with an illumined life that comes to it from the Infinite. The very planks upon which it rests give a spring to its movements. It is tossed about by the ship, which is in its turn shaken by the waves, which are stirred up by the winds. This Destroyer is, after all, but a mere plaything. The ship, the waves, the winds, all combine together to keep the terrible life in it. What is to be done with so fearful an alliance? How throw out of gear this monstrous machinery for causing shipwreck? How can man foresee its rushes here, its rushes there, its rapid whirls, its sudden halts, and terrible shocks? Any one of those frightful blows might stave in a plank in the vessel's side. How is it possible to guess at the direction of its strange and wonderful evolutions? You have to do with a projectile which changes its mind as to its destination, which seems to have ideas of its own, and every moment to move toward some fresh point! How can you arrest the object which it is necessary for you to avoid?

The terrible cannon flings itself hither and thither, advances, retreats, deals blows to the right, strikes on the left, grinds every obstacle to powder, and crushes men like flies. The great danger

of the affair consists in the elasticity of the planking. How struggle with an inclined plane which is full of whims? It seemed as though the ship held in its inmost recesses a thunderbolt which was vainly striving to break its way forth—something like the thunder growling above the earthquake.

In a moment the whole of the crew were on the scene of the accident. A gunner had caused all the mischief by neglecting to secure the nut of the chain which composed the lashing, and by not properly blocking the four wheels so that the play given to the sole and frame had torn it from the platform, and ended by breaking the breeching. The cordage had snapped, so that the gun was no longer secure on its carriage. The fixed breeching which deadens the recoil was not in use at that time. As a heavy sea struck the port, the carronade, badly lashed, had slipped back, and, bursting its chain, had commenced flying hither and thither between decks.

To give an idea of its eccentric movements imagine a drop of rain sliding down a pane of glass. At the moment when the chain broke the men were sitting on the gun deck, some in groups, others alone, engaged in those various odd jobs which sailors always seem to find to do before going into action. The gun, impelled by the motion of the vessel, dashed into the nearest group, and crushed four men to death instantly; then, hurled backward, and flung forward again by a sudden roll, it cut a fifth miserable wretch in two, glanced off to the port side, and dismounted one of the guns there.

Then rose the cry of distress that had been heard. All the crew struggled to the companion ladder, and the lower deck was deserted in the twinkling of an eye.

The huge cannon had been left alone. She was given up to herself. She was mistress of herself, and mistress of the vessel. She could do whatever she liked. Accustomed to smile even in the heat of action, all the crew trembled. To describe the feeling of dread that crept over all would be impossible.

Captain Boisberthelot and Lieutenant Vieuville, courageous men as they both were, halted at the top of the ladder, mute, pale, and hesitating, gazing into the depth below; as they did so, some one elbowed his way past them, and descended to the lower deck.

It was the passenger, the peasant, the man of whom they had just been speaking.

On reaching the bottom of the ladder he stood motionless.

The gun flew backward and forward on the deck. One might have fancied it to be the living image of the Chariot of the Apocalypse. A ship's lantern swinging from the beams above gave a strange mixture of light and shade to this appalling sight. In the rapidity of its course the cannon sometimes disappeared entirely, now it looked black in the faint light, and again cast ghastly gleams through the obscurity.

It continued the destruction of the vessel. It had already dismounted four other pieces of cannon, and burst through the outer skin of the vessel in two places, happily above the waterline, but through which the water would certainly enter should a squall come on. It rushed with madness against the planking, which, strengthened with heavy cross-pieces, resisted it, their curved shape giving them greater solidity, but they groaned and quivered beneath the blows of this terrible mace, which seemed inspired with a spirit of ubiquity, and struck on all sides at once. A pellet of shot shaken about in a bottle would not give more frequent or more frenzied blows. The four wheels passed and re-passed over the five men, cutting them in pieces, quartering them, and slashing them out of all semblance to humanity, and each corpse, divided into twenty pieces, rolled hither and thither with every pitch of the vessel. Streams of blood ran along the planking as the ship rolled. The upper planking, battered in various places, began to open out, and the whole vessel was filled with the hoarse roar of destruction.

The captain had recovered his coolness with great promptitude, and by his orders they had thrown through the hatchway on to the lower deck everything that might soften and arrest the headlong course of the gun—mattresses, hammocks, spare sails, coils of ropes, the sailors' bags, bales of false *assignats*, of which the corvette was carrying a large quantity—an infamous trick which the English nation considered an honorable way of making war.

But of what avail were these rags? No one dared to descend and place them in their proper position, and in a few minutes they were reduced to mere masses of lint.

There was just sufficient sea on to make the accident terribly complete. A storm would have been more desirable, as it might have entirely overthrown the gun, which with its four wheels in the air, could have been easily mastered. But the work of de-

struction was going on worse than ever; there were large pieces cut out of the masts which, like huge, round pillars, traversed the different decks of the vessel. Under the convulsive blows of the cannon the mizzenmast was cracked, and the mainmast itself injured. The armament of the corvette was being gradually destroyed; out of the thirty, ten guns were rendered useless; more crevices opened in the sides, and the ship began to leak.

The old passenger who had descended to the lower deck stood like a figure of marble at the bottom of the ladder, looking with a severe eye upon the scene of destruction. He remained motionless. It seemed impossible to take a step forward on the gun deck.

Each bound that the carronade, which was now at perfect liberty, made, threatened the utter destruction of the ship—a few minutes more and nothing could save her from total wreck. It was necessary to take some decisive step, and to cut short the work of destruction, but how was this to be effected?

What sort of a combatant was this cannon?

It was necessary to arrest the course of this terrible, mad creature.

It was necessary to snare this flash of lightning. It was necessary to hurl this thunderbolt to the ground.

Boisberthelot said to La Vieuville:

“Do you believe in God, Chevalier?”

La Vieuville answered:

“No—that is to say, yes—sometimes.”

“In the storm, eh?”

“Yes, and in moments like this.”

“In fact, no one but God can save us now,” said Boisberthelot.

Everyone was silent, allowing the carronade to keep up its horrible din.

Outside the surges beat against the vessel, drowning the blows of the cannon by the blows of the waves. It was like the hammers of two smiths striking alternate strokes.

All at once, in that unapproachable circle in which the liberated cannon continued its mad gambols, a man appeared with a long bar of iron in his hand.

He was the author of the whole catastrophe, the captain of the gun, guilty of that negligence that had led to such terrible results—the nominal master of the carronade.

Having done the evil, he wanted to repair it. He had grasped

a handspike in one hand, and a rope with a slipnoose with the other, and jumped boldly down into the gun deck, through one of the hatchways.

Then a terrible thing began; a Titanic drama—the strife of the gun against the gunner, the combat of matter against mind, the duel of the lifeless and the living.

The man had taken up his position at an angle, his handspike and cord stretched out ready; supported by one of the timbers, firm on his legs, which were rigid as two pillars of steel; pale, calm, and determined—as though rooted to the planking he stood awaiting the onset.

He waited for the gun to pass close by him.

The gunner knew his piece, and it seemed as if it ought to know him, too; he had lived in its company for a long time. How often had he thrust his hand down its yawning muzzle! It was his familiar monster, and he began to speak to it as if it were a dog.

“Come to me,” said he; perhaps he loved it.

He seemed to wish that it would turn in his direction, but should it do so, he would be lost. How could he avoid its crushing weight? That was the question. All gazed on the scene with eyes of terror.

Not a breath respired freely, except, perhaps, that of the old man who was alone below with the two combatants—an impassive second.

He himself ran the chance of being crushed by the piece, and yet he never stirred.

Beneath them the sea, an invisible power, directed the combat.

At the instant when the gunner accepted this terrible hand-to-hand encounter, a lull in the motion of the vessel brought the cannon to a standstill, as though stupefied. “Come here,” cried he. It seemed as if it heard him.

Suddenly it leapt at him; the man avoided the shock.

The struggle now commenced—such a struggle as had never before been heard of. The fragile opposing itself to the invulnerable. A creature of flesh and blood attacking a brazen monster. On one side was mind, on the other brute force. All this scene passed in a sort of twilight; it was like some miraculous event indistinctly seen.

A mind—strange as it may seem, the cannon appeared to pos-



sess one also—a mind filled with rage and hatred. This blind mass appeared to be endued with sight. The monster had the appearance of watching for the man. It, too, waited its opportunity; you could hardly help believing that it was filled with the spirit of cunning. It resembled some gigantic iron insect inspired with the will of a demon. At an instant this colossal grasshopper would strike the low ceiling of the deck, then it would fall back on its four wheels like a tiger upon his four paws, and, recovering itself, rush upon the man. He, adroit and skillful, supple as a snake, would evade these rushes rapid as flashes of lightning; but the blows which he avoided fell upon the vessel, and continued the work of destruction.

One end of the broken chain remained attached to the carronade. This chain was twisted in some extraordinary manner round the screw of the breech button of the gun. One end of the chain was fastened to the carriage, whilst the other, at perfect liberty, whirled frantically round the gun and increased the danger of its strokes.

The screw grasped it like a clenched hand, and the chain supplemented the blows of the battering-ram with blows of a scourge. A perfect whirlwind—a whip of iron wielded by a brazen hand. This chain complicated the combat greatly. And yet the man continued the fight. At times even it was the man that attacked the cannon. He crawled along the side of the vessel, his hand-spike and rope ready, and the gun seemed to understand him, and fly from him as though avoiding a snare. The man, formidable from his reasoning powers, pursued it.

But such a contest could not last long. The gun seemed to say to itself: "Come, I must finish this," and remained quiescent. All felt that the end was at hand. The cannon, as though in doubt, seemed to have, or indeed had—for to all it appeared to be endued with reasoning powers—a ferocious premeditated design; it threw itself on the gunner.

He sprang on one side, and let it pass by him, crying out with a mocking laugh: "Try that again." The gun, as if furious, dashed to pieces a carronade on the port side, and then, as if launched by the invisible sling that directed its movements, it rushed upon the man, who was standing at the starboard side.

The man evaded the attack.

Three more carronades yielded to the blows of the gun, then,



as though blinded, and unconscious of what it was doing, it turned away from the man, and, rolling from the stern to the bow, injured the stern, and knocked a hole in the planking of the prow. The gunner had taken refuge at the foot of the ladder near to the old man, who was looking on. The gun appeared to perceive this, and without taking the trouble to turn round, rushed backward upon the man with the rapidity of the blow of an ax.

The man, pinned against the side, seemed lost.

All the crew uttered a cry of terror.

But the old passenger, who up to this moment had seemed motionless, rushed forward with a celerity exceeding all the rapid rushes of the gun; he seized a bale of false *assignats*, and, at the risk of being crushed, succeeded in throwing it under the wheels of the carronade. This action, decisive, though full of peril, could not have been executed with more decision and promptitude by a man thoroughly trained to all the rules and regulations laid down in Duroselle's work on the "*Manœuvring of Great Guns at Sea*."

The bale had the effect of a brake—a pebble may stop the descent of a mass of stone, a branch may turn the course of the avalanche. The carronade staggered. The gunner, taking advantage of this formidable assistance, plunged his handspike between the spokes of one of the hind wheels. The gun stopped. It rocked to and fro. The man, using the bar as a lever, shook it backward and forward. The enormous mass turned over with the clash of a falling bell, and the man, darting on it headlong, bathed in perspiration, passed the slipknot round the neck of the bronze monster which he had succeeded in bringing to the ground.

It was all over. Man was the conqueror. The ant had defeated the mastodon—the pigmy had made captive the thunder.

The sailors and the marines clapped their hands for joy.

The crew rushed forward with chains and cables, and in an instant the gun was safely secured again.

The gunner saluted the passenger.

"Sir," said he, "you have saved my life."

The old man, who had resumed his calm immobility, made no reply.

The man had conquered, but it could be said that the cannon had also won a victory. Immediate wreck had been avoided, but the corvette was not yet saved. The damage done to the ves-

set seemed irreparable. There were five breaches in her sides, one of which, in the bow, was a very large one. Twenty carronades out of thirty lay useless on their carriages. The captured gun was also unserviceable, the screw of the breech button was twisted, and it was consequently impossible to aim with it. The armament was reduced to nine pieces of artillery. The ship was leaking badly, and it was necessary to call all hands to repair damages and to work the pumps. The lower deck, now that they were able to examine it, was a terrible sight. The den of a wild elephant could not have offered a more frightful scene of dilapidation.

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM DE MUSSET.

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*THE STORY OF THE WHITE BLACKBIRD.*

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It is a great thing, in this workaday world of ours, to be something a little above the common run of ordinary blackbirds, but then, too, the eminence is not without its inconveniences. I am not a bird of fable; Monsieur de Buffon has written my description, but woe is me! I am rare and but seldom met with. Would to Heaven I had never emerged from the lowly state in which I was born!

My father and mother were a couple of honest people who had lived for many years in the seclusion of a quiet old garden in the Marais. It was a model household. While my mother, in the depths of some bushy thicket, laid three times a year regularly and hatched out her brood, gently slumbering most of the time, my father, very neat in his attire and very fussy still, notwithstanding his great age, would be pecking, pecking about her all day long, with patriarchal devotion, bringing her nice little insects that he was always careful to seize by the tail, very daintily, so that his wife's delicate stomach might not be offended, and at nightfall he never failed, when the weather was fine, to treat her to a song that delighted all the neighborhood. Never was there such a thing as a quarrel, never had the smallest cloud arisen to darken this sweet union.

I had hardly made my appearance in the world when, for the first time in his life, my father began to display bad temper. Although as yet I was only of a doubtful shade of gray, he failed to recognize in me either the color or the form of his numerous progeny. Sometimes he would cock his head and look at me askance and say:



LOUIS CHARLES ALFRED DE MUSSET



"There is an untidy child for you; it would seem as if the little blackguard took pains to go and wallow in every mudhole and plaster-heap that he came to, he is always so ugly and filthy."

"Eh! Mon Dieu, my friend," my mother would answer, looking like nothing so much as a little round ball of feathers in the old earthenware porringer where she had made her nest, "don't you see that it is owing to his age? And you yourself, in your early days, were you not a charming little scapegrace? Give our little blackbirdling time to grow, and you will see how pretty he will be; I don't think that I ever hatched out a finer one."

My mother was not deceived while pleading my cause in this manner; she saw the growth of my ill-omened plumage, which appeared to her a monstrosity; but she acted as all mothers do, who allow themselves to become more strongly attached to their offspring for the very reason that nature has ill-used them, as if the responsibility rested on the maternal shoulders, or as if they rejected in advance the injustice of their unkind destiny.

With the approach of my first moulting season my father became extremely thoughtful and watched me attentively. He continued to treat me with considerable kindness so long as my feathers kept falling out, and would even bring me something to eat when he saw me shivering, almost naked, in my corner, but as soon as the down began to come out on my poor little half-frozen wings, he would fly into such a tearing rage at every white feather he saw that I greatly feared he would leave me featherless for the remainder of my days. Alas! I had no looking-glass; I did not know the cause of his anger, and I wondered why it was that the best of fathers could treat me so cruelly.

One day when a glimpse of sunshine and my growing plumage had cheered me and warmed my heart a little in spite of myself, as I was hopping about an alley I began, tempted by my evil genius, to sing. At the very first note that he heard my father flew up into the air like a skyrocket.

"What do I hear there?" he shouted. "Is that the way a blackbird whistles? Do I whistle that way? Do you call that whistling?"

And perching beside my mother with a most terrific expression of countenance:

"Wretched bird!" he said, "what stranger has been sharing your nest?"

At these words my mother indignantly threw herself from her porringer, severely injuring one of her claws in doing so; she endeavored to speak, but her sobs choked her; she fell to the ground in a half-fainting condition. I beheld her at the point of expiring; terrified and trembling with fear, I threw myself upon my knees before my father.

"Oh, father!" I said to him, "if I whistle but poorly and if I am meanly clad, let not the punishment fall upon my mother. Is it her fault if nature has not graced me with a voice like yours? Is it her fault if I have not your beautiful yellow bill and your handsome black coat *à la Française*, which give you the appearance of a churchwarden about to swallow an omelette? If Heaven has seen fit to make me a monster and if some one must pay the penalty, grant, at least, that I alone may bear the burden of misery."

"That has nothing to do with the case," said my father; "what do you mean by taking the liberty of whistling in that ridiculous manner? Who was it that taught you to whistle thus, contrary to every known rule and custom?"

"Alas! sir," I humbly replied, "I whistled as well as I knew how; for I was feeling in good spirits because the weather is fine, and perhaps I had eaten too many flies."

"That is not the way they whistle in my family," my father rejoined, quite beside himself with anger. "We have been whistling for centuries from generation to generation, and let me tell you that when I raise my voice at night there is an old gentleman here on the first floor, and a young grisette up there in the garret, who throw up their windows to listen to me. Is it not enough that my eyes are constantly offended by the horrid color of those idiotic feathers of yours, which make you look like a whitened jack-pudding at a country fair? Were I not the most long-suffering of blackbirds I should have stripped you naked long before this and reduced you to the condition of a barnyard fowl prepared for the spit."

"Very well!" I cried, unable longer to submit to such injustice, "if that is the case, sir, never mind! I will relieve you of my presence; your eyes shall no more be offended by the sight of these poor white tail-feathers by which you are continually pulling me about. I will go away, sir, I will take refuge in flight; since my mother lays thrice a year there will be other children in



plenty to console your declining years; I will go and hide my wretchedness in some distant country, and it may be," I added, with a sob, "it may be that along the gutters or in the neighbors' kitchen-garden I shall find some earthworms or a few spiders to enable me to eke out my miserable existence."

"As you please," replied my father, far from melting at this speech of mine; "only never let me set eyes on you again. You are not my son; you are not a blackbird."

"What am I then, sir, if you please?"

"I have not the slightest idea; but you are not a blackbird."

With these crushing words my father strode slowly away. My mother sadly arose and went limping to her porringer to have her cry out, while I, for my part, confounded and disconsolate, stretched my wings and took my flight as well as I could, and went and perched upon the gutter of an adjoining house as I had said I would do.\*

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\* The foregoing selection is only the first chapter (there are nine in all) of this charming tale. Nevertheless it is quite enough to give the student reader a very fair idea of De Musset's inimitable style as a story-teller.

## XV. SAINTE-BEUVE.

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Victor Hugo was the creative genius of the romantic movement. Sainte-Beuve was its expository, its critical genius. Indeed, it may well be questioned if the influence of Sainte-Beuve in that development of literary ideals and literary style in France in the nineteenth century, which is usually spoken of as the romantic movement, was not even more efficient, more vital, more productive of significant result, than that of the great poet and imaginative writer who is generally regarded as the head of the movement.

Sainte-Beuve, who was born in 1804, and was therefore but two years younger than Hugo, was at first intimately associated with Hugo and with that "*cénacle*" or inner circle of literary workers, Hugo being the chief, with which the romantic movement is usually identified. But personal intimacies such as the *cénacle* implied were incompatible with Sainte-Beuve's disposition. Though essentially amiable and gentle-spirited, he was ill suited for camaraderie. Besides, the critical faculty, always strong in him, and soon to become an abounding force, could not be reconciled with the self-suppression and the discipleship which association with such an egoistic character as that of Hugo's postulated. Sainte-Beuve, therefore, was not, in any except the younger portion of his life, a member of the so-called romantic school. Nor was the school itself, in many of its features, consonant with his nature. It was characterized by extrav-

agances, excesses, and egoistic idiosyncrasies, which his finely poised critical spirit could barely tolerate.

It has been alleged that Sainte-Beuve's antipathy to some of the men of his own age was not wholly due to the exigencies of a critic's position. Three of the greatest writers modern France has known—his own contemporaries, Balzac, De Musset, and De Vigny—died while Sainte-Beuve was still in the height of his power and fame as a critic. The estimates which the great critic pronounced upon these, his contemporaries, at the time of their demise, were characterized to some extent by what has been thought to have been personal feeling—a feeling so strong as to have seemed little short of personal dislike or hatred.

The explanation of this apparently base element in Sainte-Beuve's character is to be found in his method as a critic. With him criticism did not begin with an author's work. It only ended there. It took into consideration every ascertainable element of character in an author, and every possible condition and circumstance of his environment, before it proceeded to pronounce upon his work at all. It got at his spirit, his motive, his point of view; and especially at his method of working—whether it was sincere or not, whether it was based on fact and actuality or not. When Sainte-Beuve was convinced to any degree of an author's insincerity, of his want of regard for actuality, of his superficiality in any way, of his moral obliquity in any way, his own point of view was influenced accordingly. The mere literary features of a piece of work he little cared for. It was the character that pervaded it, the spirit with which it was executed, the end the author had in view in writing it, and the actual success attained in reaching that end.

It resulted, therefore, that Sainte-Beuve had many of what were called "topical hatreds." Certain principles, certain methods of work, certain subjects of literary treatment, and, as a consequence, certain men, were distasteful to him. "Let me tell you, sir," he once wrote to a friend respecting an author whose spirit he abhorred, declining to review one of his books—"let me tell you, sir, that to have once named that man with compliment in an article of mine is one of my self-reproaches as a man of letters. He has not attacked me in any way. It is a case of natural repulsion."

The great merit of Sainte-Beuve's critical work was its absolute independence. It followed no traditions, no cut-and-dried theories, no arbitrarily set-up rules. He did not hesitate even to change, to advance, to retract, his own opinions, whenever he felt it necessary to do so. "I am accustomed incessantly to call my judgments in question anew," he once wrote, "and to recast my opinions the moment I suspect them to be without validity." And again: "I hold very little to literary opinions. Literary opinions occupy little place in my life and in my thoughts. What does occupy me seriously is life itself and the object of it."

And the great characteristic of his critical work was its strict regard for truth. "*Truth*" he took for the motto of his life, and he had the word engraved upon his seal. To get at the "truth" of a work—its meaning, its intent—to see, indeed, how far it had a meaning, to see how successful the author was in presenting this meaning, to see how nearly in doing this he complied with the facts of things—this was his great object, the guiding principle of his work. But to effect this he must understand the author. And, to have his reader have a due appreciation of all this, he must have his



*Saint-Benoit*



reader understand the author. Hence arose that method of criticism which he made famous—by which, indeed, he gave to criticism an attraction as great almost as that possessed by any other form of literary art—the method of the “*causerie*,” as it was called. The “*causerie critique*,” of Sainte-Beuve was based partly on biography. But it was based on much else also. The author was set before the reader in all the circumstances of his life, his antecedents, his aims, his associations, and his literary atmosphere. Literary criticism in Sainte-Beuve’s hands became almost as interesting as romance.

The great part of Sainte-Beuve’s critical work was given to the world as weekly articles in newspapers. His life was as incessant in its grind of toil as if it had been spent upon a treadmill. “I never have a holiday,” he said. “On Monday, toward noon, I lift up my head and breathe for about an hour. After that the wicket shuts again and I am in my prison cell for seven days.” But so carefully was his work done, with such constant recourse to every fact concerned, and so infused with the spirit of genius was it, that Sainte-Beuve’s “Monday causeries” became “the chief recurring literary event in Europe.”

Such incessant occupation pursued under such constant strain could have but one result: he wore himself out. For years he longed for some alleviation of his daily toil; but the alleviation never came till his body had succumbed to disease. He died in 1869, but he was a worker till the last.

Sainte-Beuve in his younger days made some effort to be a poet. But his poetry, though it has grace and distinction, has not the force, the nameless charm, of great poetry. Matthew Arnold, than whose opinion none can be more valuable, had the highest regard for Sainte-



Beuve as a critic. And he had the highest regard for him personally, as a man and as a friend. But nowhere in literary history is to be found a more amusing situation than when Matthew Arnold was asked by Sainte-Beuve himself to estimate his poetry. To say the true thing, to give the true estimate, and that with tact and delicacy, was perhaps as difficult a task as the great English critic—who was himself a poet and one whom on his part Sainte-Beuve had estimated highly—ever had to perform.

But Arnold's estimate of Sainte-Beuve working in the field of criticism is wholly without restraint, and almost wholly without restriction. He speaks of Homer as the all-exceeding one "in epic narration;" of Plato as of similar excellence "in the treatment at once beautiful and profound of philosophic questions;" of Shakespeare as similarly great "in the presentation of human character;" of Voltaire, too, as similarly great in "ironical discussion." "A list of perfect ones," he ejaculates, "each in his own line." And then to the list, "in the line of literary criticism," he adds the name of Sainte-Beuve.

J. E. BRYANT.

Toronto, Canada.

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM SAINTE-BEUVE.

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MADAME GUIZOT.\*

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*From "Portraits of Celebrated Women."*

What share, apart from her own personal labors, had Mme. Guizot in those of her husband—in all those valuable accessory publications by which he accompanied his main historical work—and in which, beginning with the translation of Gibbon, she must have been his principal auxiliary? Let it suffice us\* to know that she had espoused all his interests—his studious labors as well as his convictions—and let us not attempt to discover what she preferred to conceal. Her happiness was great. Her sensibility, which grew with her years (refined privilege of a virtuous life), caused her to cling to that happiness more and more tenderly—I had almost said regretfully—as time went by. This sensibility, whereof she had so deliberately declared in her youth—sensibility spares us more suffering than it brings, for it removes at one stroke the pains of egotism, vanity, ennui, and inertia—this sensibility, to which she owed so much pure delight, did its spring within her never fail? Did not her soul, as she neared the end—even hers, strong and calm reasoner that she was—grow sorrowful? Her failing health amid a life so congenial, so virtuous, so affectionate; the great disparity in age between her husband and herself; her secret yearnings; her one acute presentiment that husband and child would yet be made happy by another than herself—these things doubtless mingled with her last years more of passion and pathos than she would ever have dared anticipate in her youth.

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\* The selection constitutes the concluding paragraphs of Sainte-Beuve's "Portrait" of Madame Guizot.

The exquisite rejuvenation in her impressions of all things was revealed in a thousand different ways. With the exception of a tour in Languedoc and the South, where M. Guizot had taken her in 1814, she had never traveled much. She had scarcely seen the country, much less resided there; but she enjoyed it in her last summer as only those who have been forced to live by wax lights enjoy verdure and the fields. The tiniest tree in Passy or in the Bois de Boulogne gave her a new and refreshing emotion. . . .

But if, as Mme. Guizot's sensibilities grew more refined, they acquired a kind of pensive cast, her deepening religious experience was disturbed by none of those anxieties with which religion is too often associated in serious and sensitive minds. Born a Catholic, early tainted with the indifferentism which she inhaled in the very atmosphere of the time, restored after doubts which had never been systematically hostile, to a fervent Christian deism, a genuine piety, she rested here, and was at peace. She had no oppressive consciousness of the unfathomable depths of grace and salvation opened along her path. She simply trusted. Prayer, as an interview with a kind and omnipresent Being, strengthened and consoled her. One day, shortly after her return from Plombières, where she had vainly sought some comfort from the conversation of those about her, and had meditated long and deeply on the question whether individuality outlasts death, or the soul is absorbed in the Supreme Being, she suddenly revived from her extreme prostration, and in a voice that gathered strength by degrees, she reviewed the various opinions, and declared her clear and confident conviction of the continuance of the soul's personality in the bosom of God. On the 1st of August, 1827, at ten o'clock in the morning, her lingering illness drew near its close. She had begged her husband to read her something good, and he had read her a letter of Fénelon's to an invalid, and then passed to a sermon of Bossuet on the immortality of the soul. While he was reading she passed away. She was buried, agreeably to her own desire, with the rites of the Reformed Church, to which her husband belonged, and whose funeral service did not contradict her own simple creed. Truthful to the end, she would have nothing factitious and conventional, nothing inconsistent with her most secret thoughts, even in those last ceremonies which follow death.

She took a lively pleasure in conversation, loving it, not as an

occasion for shining, but as a means of mental stimulus and exercise. Her manner may have seemed slightly brusque at first. Her *inquisitive reason*, as she somewhere says, searched the depths of every subject. But as her interest grew, her ideas multiplied, and, without at all intending it, she exercised a powerful influence. What more can we, who had not the honor of her personal acquaintance, say of this gifted, sagacious, exemplary and virtuous woman, who has had no superior, in our generation, save Mme. de Staël, and whom even she did not excel as a thinker, but only in a few special gifts? The sentiment which she inspires is such as can only be expressed in terms of respectful admiration—such that it seems almost a sin against one who was always intent upon being, rather than seeming, to pronounce on her behalf the words *future* and *glory*.

## XVI. THE INDIVIDUALISM OF THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT.

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The dominant note in the romantic movement was "individualism"—the expression of the personal sentiments, emotions and opinions of authors. The "disclosures" of Rousseau in his "*Confessions*," the "self-revelation" of Madame de Staël in "*Delphine*" and "*Corinne*" (Delphine is the authoress in her youth; Corinne is the ideal personage the authoress would have wished herself to be); the "*Memoirs*" of Chateaubriand; the "*Confidences*" of Lamartine—were all so many stages in a continuous development of that literary ideal which culminated in the emotional lyricism of Hugo and De Musset. And it is this ever-repeated note of individualism, the constant expression of the ego, the treating everything subjectively and not objectively, the being always personal and not impersonal, which distinguishes the real romanticists from those who were not romanticists, or who were so only in a partial degree.

Victor Hugo is, of course, the representative romanticist. He, indeed, was almost the sole continuous member of the romantic school, almost the sole member of the school who never swerved from its first asserted principles. Of all great authors in France, Hugo is the most "individual." He is always "personal." In his writing, it is his spirit, his opinion, his "ego," that per-

vades the whole. In his lyric poetry this was, of course, his strength. Lyricism is but individualism concentrated, and held in restraint, and given pleasing form by art. In his dramatic poetry it proved to be his weakness. The effective drama, the drama people care for, is always impersonal. In his novels it was partly a strength and partly a weakness. The author's personality is abounding everywhere. Under some conditions this means power; under others it is ineffectiveness.

Several remarkable characteristics of the romantic school followed from its individualism. One was its indifference to outside intellectual effort. So enwrapped was it in its own ideas, so occupied with its own exploits, that it took no cognizance of the great movements that were going on, in science, for example, or in philosophy, or even in art. Scarcely in all literary history are to be found instances of men of equal mental calibre so little concerned with the spirit of their age as were Hugo and his followers. How little like Goethe, in whom the whole mental movement of his age seemed, if not to have originated, at least to have been reflected.

A second of these characteristics was the indifference of the school to precision of speech and what may be called the verbal niceties of the author's art. Liberty became license. Emancipation from the rules prescribed by classicism for the use of authors resulted in the disregard of all rules, even those of innate good taste. Words were used without regard to their senses. Sentences were used without regard to the exigencies of dramatical construction. Poetical figures were used without regard to their inherent appropriateness. Both in poetry and in prose, the French language, once so exact and so definite in its use of words, so chaste in its employment of metaphorical speech, so well ordered and

logical in all its employments, became inexact, *outré*, and given to every sort of disorderly irregularity and license.

A more notable, because an intrinsically excellent and a lasting feature of the individualism of the romantic movement, was its independence in the choice of subjects. Classicism, in the imaginative literature of France, had ignored mediæval and modern history. As a consequence it had ignored all subjects connected with the development of modern civilization and the extension of Christianity. It had ignored all that picturesque and variform condition of society which we now call the age of chivalry. Still more completely had it, especially in the tragic drama, ignored the emotions, the passions, the highly complex thoughts and ideas, of modern life.

In England it was different. The English drama had never been enslaved to arbitrary rules. Shakespeare and his compeers had taken cognizance of life in every age, under every condition, but of English life more fully than any other. In Germany Goethe and Schiller, not to mention lesser names, had assumed the liberty of a like universality of treatment; although, also, the subjects German genius had most delighted to exert itself upon were those that were intimately associated with the development of the German people.

Here, then, were the examples of the literatures of two great nations, each in its dramatic efforts acknowledging the authority of no prescribed limitations, but by preference dealing with subjects in which the historic sentiments of their respective peoples were deeply concerned.

Another influence worked to the same end: Scott, in England, in a series of romances dealing with the historic actualities of his own and several other countries,



had shown that there is no age and no people in which and among whom imaginative literature may not find subjects adapted to the most entrancing treatment. Human nature is a theme of perpetual interest. The charm of the setting that an imaginative writer gives a theme depends, not on the age or the place, but only on the power of his genius.

Hugo had set out with the intention of being a dramatist. But individualism was too strong in him. He was not impersonal enough for effective dramatic composition. Accordingly his plays are in part lyrics and in part epics, though cast in dramatic form. Some of them, it is true, had sufficient dramatic vitality to be in a measure enduring; but it was not long before he recognized his unfitness for the dramatic calling and abandoned it.

But that which especially marked Hugo's dramatic work was the same feature that marked all the work of the romantic school of the period, the revolt against authority, the assertion of the right of the dramatist to take what themes he pleases, and to treat them how and as he pleases, paying deference only to that final question in regard to his work, "Is it good, or is it not good?"

In Hugo's hands, despite his genius, the work, considered as dramatic composition, was not good. It failed and it ceased.

Another writer, almost an exact contemporary of Hugo's, and in his early years an avowed member of the same school, took up the work and made a success of it.

This was Dumas—Alexandre Dumas—"Dumas the elder," as he is sometimes called to distinguish him from his great, and in some respects, greater, son.

Dumas, too, at first was more impressed by the individualistic features of the new movement than by anything else. He, too, put himself before the public as

Rousseau had done in the "*Confessions*," as Goethe had done in "*Werther*," as Madame de Staël had done in "*Delphine*" and "*Corinne*," as Byron had done in "*Don Juan*," as Chateaubriand and Lamartine had done in their "*Memoirs*" and "*Confidences*," as Victor Hugo was doing in his odes, his songs, and his dramas, as Musset was doing in his poems, and as George Sand was doing in her romances of the "misunderstood woman." But Dumas had in his literary work what may be called the commercial sense. He divined instinctively what would take and what would not take. He saw that what the public wanted in a dramatic author was not that he should talk about himself, or even show himself in the guise of several more or less interesting aliases; but rather that he should give them striking situations, well-sustained and amusing dialogue, effective characterization and ingenious plot, and, if it could be managed, an impressive moral. Working with this ideal in view he soon produced dramas that were quite destitute of the "individualism"—that is to say, the "self-revelation"—of the romantic school, though in every other respect they were as unlike the dramas of the classical school as could possibly be.

The same commercialism that prompted Dumas to change his plan in his dramatic work prompted him subsequently to abandon the drama and to betake himself to the field of the historical-novel. He saw what Scott had made of that form of literature, and he divined that a similar success lay open to him should he choose to work for it. What Dumas might have accomplished had he given himself seriously and honestly to literary art, there can be no possible telling, for his genius was of the very highest. As it is he is a phenomenon in literature without a parallel. But it can not be said that

he has been a great influence in literature, or the head, as has sometimes been asserted, of a definite school. The historic novel in Dumas's hands was a mere *tour de force*, something that people wonder at and are amused with, but are scarcely willing to adopt as a literary model.

## XVII. DUMAS.

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Although not one of the greatest names in the history of French literature, there are none which are more widely known than that of Alexandre Dumas, none which excite more sympathy. All over the civilized world the author of the "*Three Musketeers*" is known and loved, for the man was as generous and warm-hearted as some of his chivalric heroes, and we admire Dumas through D'Artagnan, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis. However incredible are most of the exploits of the musketeers, we believe that the four friends really lived. Their adventures are so interesting, they speak with such assurance, that we are impressed with their heroic spirit, and feel confident that they can withstand an army and be cheerful in the midst of dangers which would appall ordinary mortals. Dumas has created types. D'Artagnan is the brave but clever soldier, fearless and good-hearted, but not unmindful of worldly goods; Athos is the noble and disinterested gentleman; Porthos is the embodiment of physical strength and mental weakness; and Aramis is the type of the cunning and intelligent man who does not hesitate to tell an untruth, if it is to his interest to do so, but who is not a cowardly hypocrite. There are few types in literature, and Dumas deserves great credit for having created several. His imagination was boundless, and his dramatic talent very great, not only in his plays, but also in his novels, where the dialogue is always animated and interesting. No writer has been more

prolific than Alexandre Dumas, and a number of his works will doubtless perish. He deserves, however, to live as a dramatist, and as a novelist; and a brief sketch of his life may be interesting.

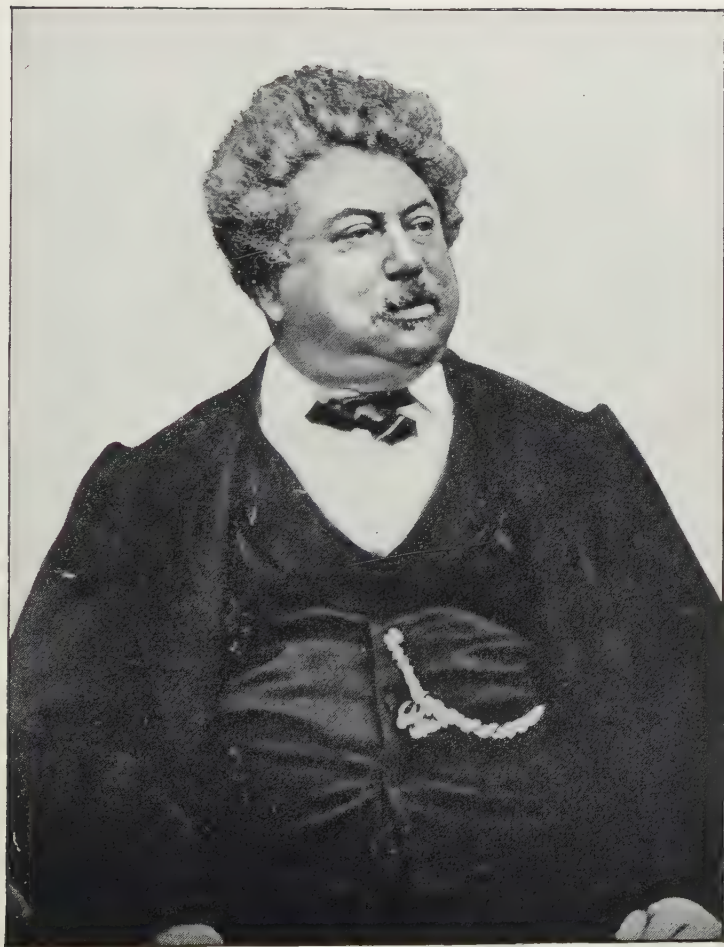
Alexandre Dumas was born in 1803 at Villers-Cotterets. His father was from Santo Domingo and was the natural son of the Marquis Alexandre Davy de la Pailleterie and of a negress. He rose to the high rank of general of division during the wars of the French revolution—and accompanied Bonaparte to Egypt. General Dumas died in 1807 and left no fortune to his son. When the latter was twenty years of age he went to Paris to solicit the aid of his father's friends in obtaining a position. General Foy, the great orator, was willing to help him and asked him a few questions about his education. Dumas blushed in acknowledging his ignorance, and General Foy finally asked him to give him his address. On seeing Dumas's handwriting the general exclaimed: "We are saved; you write a good hand." He then obtained a situation for the young man as one of the clerks of the Duke of Orleans, at a salary of 1,200 francs. It is said that Dumas told General Foy that he would live from his handwriting until he could live from his pen. From that moment his life became one of arduous labor. He devoted his nights to study and read a number of books which gave a certain discipline to his wonderful imagination. He says in his "*Memoirs*" that he attended once a representation of "*Hamlet*," and that he felt like a blind man who had regained his sight.

In 1827 Victor Hugo wrote "*Cromwell*," and gave in the preface to that work the precepts of the romantic drama: No unities of time and of place, the comic and the serious in the same play, the faithful representation of history and of nature. Dumas adopted enthusiastically

Hugo's ideas and wrote "*Christine at Fontainebleau*." This drama was accepted at the Théâtre Français, but was not played. Dumas was more fortunate with "*Henry III. and His Court*," which was acted on February 11, 1829. As Hugo's "*Cromwell*" and "*Marion Delorme*" had not been played, Dumas had the honor of being the first writer of a successful drama of the romantic school. The author presents an animated and brilliant picture of the court of the last Valois king, and relates a very tragic story with real dramatic talent. His success was great, and prepared, without doubt, the success of Hugo's beautiful "*Hernani*," which was played on February 25, 1830.

The romantic school did not succeed in producing a drama true to nature and to history, but by his "*Antony*" (1831) Dumas inaugurated the contemporary drama, where, says M. Petit de Julleville, "the sorrows, the shame of the family and of the fireside, are displayed violently, brutally, even to the eyes of the spectator; where all the social and domestic problems to which our modern civilization gives rise are passionately exposed." Of Dumas's numerous dramas, the most successful have been "*Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle*" and "*Les Demoiselles de Saint Cyr*." Some of his most popular novels have been dramatized, such as "*Monte Cristo*" and "*The Three Musketeers*," and have been very successful.

The life of Dumas after the success of his first books was one of extraordinary labor, and the number of works which he produced is wonderful. He was accused of having a manufactory of novels, and of having many collaborators whose names never appeared on the title page of his volumes. It was even said that he signed works which he had not written, and it was proved that he had contracted to write for the *Presse* and the *Constitutionnel* more volumes in one year than could be copied by the most skill-



ALEXANDRE DUMAS (*Père*)





ful clerk. There is no doubt that Dumas had a number of assistants, among whom we may mention Anicet-Bourgeois, Fiorentino, Paul Meurice, and Auguste Maquet. The assistants claimed a share of the success of Dumas's novels, but, says Mr. Andrew Lang: "The answer is convincing. Not one of these ingenious men ever produced by himself anything that could be mistaken for the work of the master. All his good things have the same stamp and the same spirit which we find nowhere else."

Dumas earned enormous sums of money, \$200,000 in one year, and he squandered his money as fast as he earned it. He built near Saint-Germain the château of Monte Cristo, and was ever in debt. He was generous and childlike, and was easily duped, and had a crowd of parasites at his house. He said that even his dogs took all the dogs of the neighborhood to board and lodge in his house. He was devoted to his mother; and speaks of her in his "*Memoirs*" in the most affectionate manner. He was a kind father and was very proud of the success of his son, Alexandre Dumas, the celebrated author of "*La Dame aux Camélias*" ("*Camille*"). In short, in spite of his extravagance, of his vanity, Dumas was an excellent man, and was as popular with his contemporaries as were his dramas and his novels.

The works of Alexandre Dumas cover nearly all the periods of the history of France, and his novels are called historical. Let us say here that he who has studied history solely in Dumas's novels runs great risks to be greatly disappointed when he reads the works of a real historian. The Richelieu of "*The Three Musketeers*" is not the Richelieu of M. Gabriel Hanotaux, and the Henry III. of the "*Forty-Five*" is not the despicable monarch so well described by Michelet and Henri Martin. Nevertheless, Dumas presents history, as he understands it, in such an

interesting manner that he may have induced many persons to study history seriously and make investigations. Some of his inventions, however, are almost ludicrous, as when D'Artagnan captures Monk in the midst of his army, puts him in a wooden box and carries him to Holland, where he presents the general as a gift to Charles II. The young king liberates Monk, and the latter, to show his gratitude, places the son of Charles I. on the throne of the Stuarts. Surely Macaulay never dreamed that such was the cause of the restoration! We may laugh at the childishness of the above story, but we are amused and interested throughout, as the dialogue is so witty and the narrative so animated. How amusing is D'Artagnan's departure on his yellow horse from the paternal castle, how chivalric is the defense of the bastion Saint-Gervais, how interesting is the escape of the Duke of Beaufort from the Bastille, how touching is the death of Porthos, Athos, and D'Artagnan! Dumas was a great amuser, and many generations will read his entrancing novels, "*Queen Margot*," "*The Lady of Monsoreau*," "*The Forty-Five*," "*The Three Musketeers*," "*Twenty Years After*," "*The Viscount of Bragelonne*," "*Monte Cristo*" and many others.

On his deathbed in 1870 Dumas asked his son whether any of his works would live, and Alexandre Dumas, fils, replied that many would live. This was not filial partiality, and posterity will ratify that judgment. Many generations yet to come will read with delight the works of Alexandre Dumas.

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### SELECTED STUDY.

The literature of France during the last generation has been prolific in dramas and romances, all of which

indicate a chaos of opinion. It is not professedly infidel, like that of the eighteenth century, nor professedly pietistic, like that of the seventeenth. It seems to have no general aim, the opinions and efforts of the authors being seldom consistent with themselves for any length of time. No one can deny that this literature engages the reader's most intense interest by the seductive sagacity of the movement, the variety of incident, and the most perfect command of those means calculated to produce certain ends. During this period the romance-writing of France has taken two different directions. The first, that of the novel of incident, of which Scott was the model; the second, that of analysis and character, illustrated by the genius of Balzac and George Sand. The stories of Hugo are novels of incident with ideal character painting. Dumas's works are dramatic in character and charming for their brilliancy and wit. His "*Trois Mousquetaires*" and "*Monte Cristo*" are considered his best novels. Of a similar kind are the novels of Eugene Sue. Both writers were followed by a crowd of companions and imitators.—BOTTA.

## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM DUMAS.

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### THE KING'S MUSKETEERS AND THE CARDINAL'S GUARDS.

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*From "The Three Musketeers."*

D'Artagnan, a young Gascon, poor and unknown, has come from his native province to Paris to seek his fortune. His only hope of getting a start in the world lies in the fact that his father once knew M. de Tréville, the captain of the King's Musketeers. On his arrival in Paris, D'Artagnan has introduced himself to M. de Tréville. M. de Tréville, who is also a Gascon, is disposed to be kind to him, but he half suspects him to be an emissary of Cardinal Richelieu, whose ambition it is to be master of the King as he already is of the kingdom. This ambition it is the policy of de Tréville, much to the vexation of the Cardinal, constantly to endeavor to thwart. The consequence is that between the Cardinal's Guards and the King's Musketeers there is a great and perpetual rivalry, with many resulting brawls. On account of de Tréville's suspicions, D'Artagnan got little from his audience with the Captain of the Musketeers beyond vague promises of future help.

On leaving de Tréville's house, D'Artagnan had the misfortune to encounter and give offense to first, Athos, second, Porthos, and third, Aramis, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis being the three chief members of de Tréville's band of Musketeers. He had forcibly run into Athos and hurt his shoulder, which was sore from a wound received from a fight with some members of the Cardinal's Guards a day or two before; he had discovered that Porthos's golden baldric, of which Porthos was very proud and inclined to boast, was not gold all round, but was carefully covered up behind by a cloak; and he had displeased Aramis by pointedly calling his attention to the fact, before some friends from whom Aramis wished to conceal it, that he had dropped a lady's handkerchief which he carried. Accordingly, he had three duels on hand—one with Athos at twelve o'clock; one

with Porthos at one o'clock; one with Aramis at two o'clock. Just as the duels were about to begin, the parties were discovered by some members of the Cardinal's Guards. As dueling had been prohibited by an edict, these Guards took it upon themselves to interfere, their object being, however, not the enforcement of the edict so much as the humiliation of the Musketeers by taking into custody their three chief members. In the conflict that ensued, D'Artagnan sides with the Musketeers, and thus proves himself worthy of de Tréville's confidence.

D'Artagnan was acquainted with nobody in Paris. He went therefore to his appointment with Athos without a second, determined to be satisfied with those his adversary should choose. Besides, his intention was formed to make the brave musketeer all suitable apologies, but without meanness or weakness, fearing that might result from this duel which generally results from an affair of the kind, when a young and vigorous man fights with an adversary who is wounded and weakened—if conquered, he doubles the triumph of his antagonist; if a conqueror, he is accused of foul play and want of courage.

Now, we must have badly painted the character of our adventure-seeker, or our readers must have already perceived that D'Artagnan was not an ordinary man; therefore, while repeating to himself that his death was inevitable, he did not make up his mind to die quietly, as one less courageous and less restrained might have done in his place. He reflected upon the different characters of the men he had to fight with, and began to view his situation more clearly. He hoped, by means of loyal excuses, to make a friend of Athos, whose lordly air and austere bearing pleased him much. He flattered himself he should be able to frighten Porthos with the adventure of the baldric, which he might, if not killed upon the spot, relate to everybody—a recital which, well managed, would cover Porthos with ridicule. As to the astute Aramis, he did not entertain much dread of him; and supposing he should be able to get so far, he determined to dispatch him in good style, or at least by hitting him in the face, as Cæsar recommended his soldiers to do to those of Pompey, damage forever the beauty of which he was so proud.

In addition to this D'Artagnan possessed that invincible stock of resolution which the counsels of his father had implanted in his heart: "Endure nothing from anyone but the king, the cardinal, and M. de Tréville." He flew, then, rather than walked, toward the convent of the Carmes Déchaussés, or rather Des-

chaux, as it was called at that period, a sort of building without a window, surrounded by barren fields—an accessory to the Pré-aux-Clercs, and which was generally employed as the place for the rencontres of men who had no time to lose.

When D'Artagnan arrived in sight of the bare spot of ground which extended along the foot of the monastery, Athos had been waiting about five minutes, and twelve o'clock was striking. He was, then, as punctual as the Samaritan woman, and the most rigorous casuist with regard to duels could have nothing to say.

Athos, who still suffered grievously from his wound, though it had been dressed anew by M. de Tréville's surgeon, was seated on a post and waiting for his adversary with that placid countenance and that noble air which never forsook him. At sight of D'Artagnan, he arose and came politely a few steps to meet him. The latter, on his side, saluted his adversary with hat in hand, his feather even touching the ground.

"Monsieur," said Athos, "I have engaged two of my friends as seconds; but these two friends are not yet come, at which I am astonished, as it is not at all their custom."

"I have no seconds on my part, Monsieur," said D'Artagnan, "for having only arrived yesterday in Paris, I as yet know no one but M. de Tréville, to whom I was recommended by my father, who has the honor to be, in some degree, one of his friends."

Athos reflected for an instant. "You know no one but M. de Tréville?" he asked.

"Yes, Monsieur, I know only him."

"Well, but then," continued Athos, speaking half to himself—"well, but then, if I kill you, I shall have the air of a boy-slayer."

"Not too much so," replied D'Artagnan, with a bow that was not deficient in dignity—"not too much so, since you do me the honor to draw a sword with me while suffering from a wound which is very inconvenient."

"Very inconvenient, upon my word; and you hurt me devilishly, I can tell you. But I will take the left hand—it is my custom in such circumstances. Do not fancy that I do you a favor; I use either hand easily, and it will be even a disadvantage to you; a left-handed man is very troublesome to people who are not prepared for it. I regret I did not inform you sooner of this circumstance."



"You have truly, Monsieur," said D'Artagnan, bowing again, "a courtesy for which, I assure you, I am very grateful."

"You confuse me," replied Athos, with his gentlemanly air; "let us talk of something else, if you please. Ah, s'blood, how you have hurt me! my shoulder quite burns."

"If you would permit me——" said D'Artagnan, with timidity. "What, Monsieur?"

"I have a miraculous balsam for wounds—a balsam given to me by my mother, and of which I have made a trial upon myself."

"Well?"

"Well, I am sure that in less than three days this balsam would cure you; and at the end of the three days, when you would be cured—well, sir, it would still do me a great honor to be your man."

D'Artagnan spoke these words with a simplicity that did honor to his courtesy, without throwing the least doubt upon his courage.

"Pardieu, Monsieur!" said Athos, "that's a proposition that pleases me; not that I accept it, but a league off it savors of the gentleman. Thus spoke and acted the gallant knights of the time of Charlemagne, in whom every cavalier ought to seek his model. Unfortunately, we do not live in the times of the great emperor, we live in the times of the Cardinal; and three days hence, however well the secret might be guarded, it would be known, I say, that we were to fight, and our combat would be prevented. I think these fellows will never come."

"If you are in haste, Monsieur," said D'Artagnan, with the same simplicity with which a moment before he had proposed to him to put off the duel for three days—"if you are in haste, and if it be your will to dispatch me at once, do not inconvenience yourself, I pray you."

"There is another word which pleases me," cried Athos, with a gracious nod to D'Artagnan. "That did not come from a man without brains, and certainly not from a man without a heart. Monsieur, I love men of your kidney; and I foresee plainly that if we don't kill each other, I shall hereafter have much pleasure in your conversation. We will wait for these gentlemen, so please you; I have plenty of time, and it will be more correct. Ah, here is one of them, I believe."

In fact, at the end of the Rue Vaugirard, the gigantic Porthos appeared.

"What!" cried D'Artagnan, "is your first witness M. Porthos?"

"Yes. That disturbs you?"

"By no means."

"And here is the second."

D'Artagnan turned in the direction pointed to by Athos, and perceived Aramis.

"What!" cried he, in an accent of greater astonishment than before, "your second witness is M. Aramis?"

"Doubtless! Are you not aware that we are never seen one without the others, and that we are called among the Musketeers and the Guards, at court and in the city, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, or the Three Inseparables? And yet, as you come from Dax or Pau——"

"From Tarbes," said D'Artagnan.

"It is probable you are ignorant of this little fact," said Athos.

"My faith!" replied D'Artagnan, "you are well named, gentlemen; and my adventure, if it should make any noise, will prove at least that your union is not founded upon contrasts."

In the meantime Porthos had come up, waved his hand to Athos, and then turning toward D'Artagnan, stood quite astonished.

Let us say in passing that he had changed his baldric, and relinquished his cloak.

"Ah, ah!" said he, "what does this mean?"

"This is the gentleman I am going to fight with," said Athos, pointing to D'Artagnan with his hand, and saluting him with the same gesture.

"Why, it is with him I am also going to fight," said Porthos.

"But not before one o'clock," replied D'Artagnan.

"And I also am to fight with this gentleman," said Aramis, coming in his turn on to the place.

"But not till two o'clock," said D'Artagnan, with the same calmness.

"But what are you going to fight about, Athos," asked Aramis.

"Faith! I don't very well know. He hurt my shoulder. And you Porthos?"

"Faith! I am going to fight—because I am going to fight," answered Porthos.

Athos, whose keen eye lost nothing, perceived a faintly sly

smile pass over the lips of the young Gascon, as he replied, "We had a short discussion upon dress."

"And you, Aramis?" asked Athos.

"Oh, ours is a theological quarrel," replied Aramis, making a sign to D'Artagnan to keep secret the cause of their duel.

Athos saw a second smile on the lips of D'Artagnan.

"Indeed," said Athos.

"Yes; a passage of St. Augustine, upon which we could not agree," said the Gascon.

"Decidedly, this is a clever fellow," murmured Athos.

"And now you are all assembled, gentlemen," said D'Artagnan, "permit me to offer my apologies."

At this word *apologies*, a cloud passed over the brow of Athos, a haughty smile curled the lip of Porthos, and a negative sign was the reply of Aramis.

"You do not understand me, gentlemen," said D'Artagnan, throwing up his head, the sharp and bold lines of which were at the moment gilded by a bright ray of the sun. "I asked to be excused in case I should not be able to discharge my debt to all three; for M. Athos has the right to kill me first, which must abate your valor in your own estimation, M. Porthos, and render yours almost null, M. Aramis. And now, gentlemen, I repeat, excuse me, but on that account only, and—on guard!"

At these words, with the most gallant air possible, D'Artagnan drew his sword.

The blood had mounted to the head of D'Artagnan, and at that moment he would have drawn his sword against all the musketeers in the kingdom as willingly as he now did against Athos, Porthos and Aramis.

It was a quarter past midday. The sun was in its zenith, and the spot chosen for the scene of the duel was exposed to its full ardor.

"It is very hot," said Athos, drawing his sword in his turn, "and yet I can not take off my doublet; for I just now felt my wound begin to bleed again, and I should not like to annoy Monsieur with the sight of blood which he has not drawn from me himself."

"That is true, Monsieur," replied D'Artagnan, "and whether drawn by myself or another, I assure you I shall always view with regret the blood of so brave a gentleman. I will therefore fight in my doublet, like yourself."

"Come, come, enough of such compliments," cried Porthos. "Remember, we are waiting for our turns."

"Speak for yourself when you are inclined to utter such incongruities," interrupted Aramis. "For my part, I think what they say is very well said, and quite worthy of two gentlemen."

"When you please, Monsieur," said Athos, putting himself on guard.

"I waited your orders," said D'Artagnan, crossing swords.

But scarcely had the two rapiers clashed, when a company of the Guards of His Eminence, commanded by M. de Jussac, turned the corner of the convent.

"The Cardinal's Guards!" cried Aramis and Porthos at the same time. "Sheathe your swords, gentlemen, sheathe your swords!"

But it was too late. The two combatants had been seen in a position which left no doubt of their intentions.

"Halloo!" cried Jussac, advancing toward them, and making a sign to his men to do likewise, "halloo, musketeers? Fighting here, are you? And the edicts, what is become of them?"

"You are very generous, gentlemen of the Guards," said Athos, full of rancor, for Jussac was one of the aggressors of the preceding day. "If we were to see you fighting, I can assure you that we would make no effort to prevent you. Leave us alone, then, and you will enjoy a little amusement without cost to yourselves."

"Gentlemen," said Jussac, "it is with great regret that I pronounce the thing impossible. Duty before everything. Sheathe, then, if you please, and follow us."

"Monsieur," said Aramis, parodying Jussac, "it would afford us great pleasure to obey your polite invitation if it depended upon ourselves; but unfortunately the thing is impossible—M. de Tréville has forbidden it. Pass on your way, then; it is the best thing to do."

This raillery exasperated Jussac. "We will charge upon you, then," said he, "if you disobey."

"There are five of them," said Athos, half aloud, "and we are but three; we shall be beaten again, and must die on the spot, for, on my part, I declare I will never again appear before the captain as a conquered man."

Athos, Porthos, and Aramis instantly drew near one another, while Jussac drew up his soldiers.

This short interval was enough to determine D'Artagnan on the part he was to take. It was one of those events which decide the life of a man; it was a choice between the king and the cardinal—the choice made, it must be persisted in. To fight, that was to disobey the law, that was to risk his head, that was to make at one blow an enemy of a minister more powerful than the king himself. All this the young man perceived, and yet, to his praise we speak it, he did not hesitate a second. Turning toward Athos and his friends, "Gentlemen," said he, "allow me to correct your words, if you please. You said you were but three, but it appears to me we are four."

"But you are not one of us," said Porthos.

"That's true," replied D'Artagnan; "I have not the uniform, but I have the spirit. My heart is that of a musketeer; I feel it, Monsieur, and that impels me on."

"Withdraw, young man," cried Jussac, who, doubtless, by his gestures and the expression of his countenance, had guessed D'Artagnan's design. "You may retire; we consent to that. Save your skin, begone quickly."

D'Artagnan did not budge.

"Decidedly, you are a brave fellow," said Athos, pressing the young man's hand.

"Come, come, choose your part," cried Jussac.

"Well," said Porthos to Aramis, "we must do something."

"Monsieur is full of generosity," said Athos.

But all three reflected upon the youth of D'Artagnan, and dreaded his inexperience.

"We should only be three, one of whom is wounded, with the addition of a boy," resumed Athos, "and yet it will be not the less said we were four men."

"Yes, but to yield!" said Porthos.

"That is difficult," replied Athos.

D'Artagnan comprehended their irresolution.

"Try me, gentlemen," said he, "and I swear to you by my honor that I will not go hence if we are conquered."

"What is your name, my brave fellow?" said Athos.

"D'Artagnan, Monsieur."

"Well, then, Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and D'Artagnan, forward!" cried Athos.

"Come, gentlemen, have you decided," cried Jussac for the third time.

"It is done, gentlemen," said Athos.

"And what is your choice?" asked Jussac.

"We are about to have the honor of charging you," replied Aramis, lifting his hat with one hand, and drawing his sword with the other.

"Ah! you resist, do you?" cried Jussac.

"S'blood! does that astonish you?"

And the nine combatants rushed upon each other with a fury which, however, did not exclude a certain degree of method.

Athos fixed upon a certain Cahusac, a favorite of the cardinal's. Porthos had Bicarot, and Aramis found himself opposed to two adversaries. As to D'Artagnan, he found himself assailing Jussac himself.

The heart of the young Gascon beat as if it would burst through his side—not from fear, God be thanked, he had not the shade of it, but with emulation; he fought like a furious tiger, turning ten times round his adversary, and changing his ground and his guard twenty times. Jussac was, as was then said, a fine blade, and had had much practice; nevertheless, it required all his skill to defend himself against an adversary who, active and energetic, departed every instant from received rules, attacking him on all sides at once, and yet parrying like a man who had the greatest respect for his own epidermis.

This contest at length exhausted Jussac's patience. Furious at being held in check by one whom he had considered a boy, he became warm, and began to make mistakes. D'Artagnan, who, though wanting in practice, had a sound theory, redoubled his agility. Jussac, anxious to put an end to this, springing forward, aimed a terrible thrust at his adversary, but the latter parried it; and while Jussac was recovering himself, glided like a serpent beneath his blade, and passed his sword through his body. Jussac fell like a dead mass.

D'Artagnan then cast an anxious and rapid glance over the field of battle.

Aramis had killed one of his adversaries, but the other pressed

him warmly. Nevertheless, Aramis was in a good situation, and able to defend himself.

Bicarar and Porthos had just made counter-hits. Porthos had received a thrust through his arm, and Bicarar one through his thigh. But neither of these two wounds was serious, and they only fought the more earnestly.

Athos, wounded anew by Cahusac, became evidently paler, but did not give way a foot. He only changed his sword hand, and fought with his left hand.

According to the laws of dueling at that period, D'Artagnan was at liberty to assist whom he pleased. While he was endeavoring to find out which of his companions stood in greatest need, he caught a glance from Athos. This glance was of sublime eloquence. Athos would have died rather than appeal for help; but he could look, and with that look ask assistance. D'Artagnan interpreted it; with a terrible bound he sprang to the side of Cahusac, crying, "To me, Monsieur Guardsman, I will slay you!"

Cahusac turned. It was time, for Athos, whose great courage alone supported him, sank upon his knee.

"S'blood!" cried he to D'Artagnan, "do not kill him, young man, I beg of you. I have an old affair to settle with him when I am cured and sound again. Disarm him only—make sure of his sword. That's it! Very well done!"

This exclamation was drawn from Athos by seeing the sword of Cahusac fly twenty paces from him. D'Artagnan and Cahusac sprang forward at the same instant, the one to recover, the other to obtain, the sword; but D'Artagnan, being the more active, reached it first, and placed his foot upon it.

Cahusac immediately ran to the Guardsman whom Aramis had killed, seized his rapier, and returned toward D'Artagnan; but on his way he met Athos, who, during this relief which D'Artagnan had procured him, had recovered his breath, and who, for fear that D'Artagnan would kill his enemy, wished to resume the fight.

D'Artagnan perceived that it would be disobliging Athos not to leave him alone; and in a few minutes Cahusac fell, with a sword-thrust through his throat.

At the same instant Aramis placed his sword-point on the breast of his fallen enemy, and forced him to ask for mercy.

There only then remained Porthos and Bicarar. Porthos made



a thousand flourishes, asking Bicarat what o'clock it could be, and offering him his compliments upon his brother's having just obtained a company in the regiment of Navarre; but, jest as he might, he gained nothing. Bicarat was one of those iron men who never fall dead.

Nevertheless, it was necessary to finish. The watch might come up and take all the combatants, wounded or not, royalists or cardinalists. Athos, Aramis, and D'Artagnan surrounded Bicarat, and required him to surrender. Though alone against all, and with a wound in his thigh, Bicarat wished to hold out; but Jussac, who had risen upon his elbow, cried out to him to yield. Bicarat was a Gascon, as D'Artagnan was; he turned a deaf ear, and contented himself with laughing, and between two parries finding time to point to a spot of earth with his sword, "Here," cried he, parodying a verse of the Bible—"here will Bicarat die; for I only am left, and they seek my life."

"But there are four against you; leave off, I command you."

"Ah, if you command me, that's another thing," said Bicarat. "As you are my commander, it is my duty to obey." And springing backward, he broke his sword across his knee to avoid the necessity of surrendering it, threw the pieces over the convent wall, and crossed his arms, whistling a cardinalist air.

Bravery is always respected, even in an enemy. The Musketeers saluted Bicarat with their swords, and returned them to their sheaths. D'Artagnan did the same. Then, assisted by Bicarat, the only one left standing, he bore Jussac, Cahusac, and one of Aramis's adversaries who was only wounded, under the porch of the convent. The fourth, as we have said, was dead. They then rang the bell, and carrying away four swords out of five, they took their road, intoxicated with joy, toward the hotel of M. de Tréville.

They walked arm in arm, occupying the whole width of the street, and taking in every Musketeer they met, so that in the end it became a triumphal march. The heart of D'Artagnan swam in delirium; he marched between Athos and Porthos, pressing them tenderly.

"If I am not yet a Musketeer," said he to his new friends, as he passed through the gateway of Monsieur de Tréville's hotel, "at least I have entered upon my apprenticeship, haven't I?"

## XVIII. ROMANTICISM IN TRANSITION.

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We have spoken of the romantic movement as being the cardinal feature of the literary history of France during the nineteenth century. But it was especially the dominant feature of French literature during the period that was mainly covered by the reign of Louis Philippe, the period of the two revolutions, that of 1830, and that of 1848. This was a period, especially at its beginning and end, of immense political activity; a period when new ideas of civic life, of national and social reform, were born with every hour; and it has always happened that unwonted activity in politics and unwonted activity in literature have been coincident. But the romantic movement had scarcely started before it began to show signs of complexity and of differentiation. Its revolt against authority, its independence in its choice of themes, its independence in its literary methods generally—its free use of language, its uncontrolled use of



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figures of speech, its resort to such modes of development and treatment as it thought proper without respect to previously established authority, etc., all this, indeed, remained. That is to say, its spirit of revolt and independence remained. But everything else became a matter of individual choice and fancy.

The words "romantic" and "romanticist" are associated with the word "romance," which both historically, and as a matter of use in the period we are discussing, implied a tale or story of events that lay outside of common experience. The "*Cinq Mars*" of De Vigny (1826), a dramatic tale of conspiracy of the time of Richelieu; the "*Notre Dame*" of Victor Hugo (1831), a tale of medieval Paris—works that mark the beginning and the full flow of the romantic movement, were each concerned with conditions of life that had no significant parallel in the life of the day they were written in. All the great masterpieces of Dumas were of similar character. Like the romances of Scott, they were the praise and glorification of a past time. They did not deal with ordinary life or humanity. The dramas of Hugo and his other earlier novels were the same. They were not real. They were ideal, fanciful, imaginative, poetical.

But a great epoch in literature can never be altogether uniflorous. Sooner or later its real fecundity must show itself. And it was so in this case. Romanticism, pure and simple, became only one feature, and at most but a prominent feature, of the so-called romantic movement.

There were differentiations of various kinds. In especial there was the differentiation of which Balzac was the main originator.

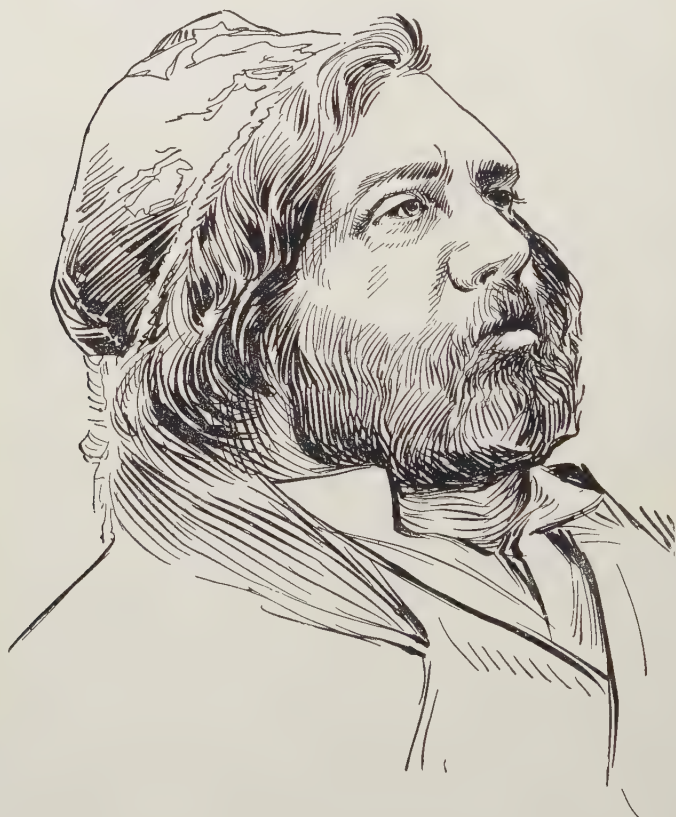
Under the true romanticists the novel had the delineation and effective portraiture of beauty in nature, or in art, or in "the human form divine" for its principal objective

feature. Its principal subjective feature was the exposition of the force and variancy of passionate love. Exploits of various kinds—of daring, bravery, and ingenuity in man, of suffering and endurance and perhaps of waywardness in women—these made up what may be called the action of the novel.

But under Balzac beauty was no longer considered the main feature of the novelist's objective treatment. For beauty he substituted actuality. The real, and not the imagined beautiful, is what he wished to depict. In his subjective treatment he insisted that love should have no more place or precedence than it has in actual life. Love—that is to say, the love of man and woman—is but one force-factor in the complex machinery of human action. There are many other motive forces. Among the more important of these he placed the love of money. So that in Balzac, instead of the vagaries of the love-passion, we have the play and interplay of modern real life in all its intricacies of business and every-day employment. He presents us the life which now is, or which actually has been. So far, then, as the object of his art is concerned, Balzac is the very opposite of the romanticist. He is a realist.

Then, again, there was the differentiation of which PROSPER MÉRIMÉE (1803-1870) and THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811-1872) were the chief exemplars—the differentiation that made for exactness and precision and word artistry. Mérimée and Gautier, however, were not the first. DE VIGNY (1799-1864), an earlier member of the same school, had already said: "A book, as I conceive it, ought to be composed, fashioned, sculptured, cut, finished, filed, and polished, like a statue of Parian marble." Unfortunately, De Vigny, except in some of his smaller poems, could not realize this high ideal of his. But Méri-

mée and Gautier did realize it: the one in his short tales, the most perfect in form and finish that any language has ever seen; the other in his poems and stories and in his



THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

descriptive pieces. With these writers there was no looseness of phraseology, no awkwardness of metre or diction, no infelicity of any sort. Though differing from one an-

other, the one being concise and neat, the other, in his prose at least, flowing and ornate, they each exemplify a departure from the ordinary manner of the romanticists, in style, quite as remarkable as that of Balzac was in method.

The writings of the romanticists proper in their earlier days had been characterized by "individualism"—that is to say, by personal opinions, self-revelation, lyric passion. This was especially true of one who as to everything else showed characteristics quite different from those of the main body of the group. GEORGE SAND (1804-1876) in her first great works, "*Indiana*," "*Valentine*," and "*Lélia*" (1831-33), portrayed the emotions, revealed the passions, and uttered the cries of her own heart. These works, if any ever were, are pervaded to the utmost by that "lyric thrill" which is the characteristic of all individualistic literature. But in every other respect they differ from the other novels of their age. They deal not with an exotic or bygone life, but with the life of their own age and country. And though their incidents and situations are moving and absorbing, they are not extraordinary.

These early works of George Sand were indeed the beginning of a literature that has had great vogue in France in the last half of this century—the literature of the so-called "naturalistic" school. But George Sand in her treatment of these novels in no way exemplified the methods of the "naturalists." They are realists. She was an idealist. They have often been only skillful workmen, or, at most, educated artists. She was a poet—a born artist. They, for the most part, have been mere dissectors and analyzers. In her strongest moods George Sand wrote with a definite purpose in view.

In these characteristics of George Sand's in which she differed from the so-called naturalistic school, we have

also illustrations of further differentiations from the school of the romanticists proper. The romanticists proper were idealists it is true; but they were idealists only within the range of individualism. George Sand, by her gift of fancy and poetic power became, in some of her later and slighter work, a writer of idyls, of themes treated objectively and yet made prose poems. Again, by the intensity of her conviction in certain subjects, united with the artistic power her gift of imagination insured to her, she became the originator of the true "social novel," the novel of social life treated impersonally and objectively, and yet both purposefully and poetically. Her purpose, it may be remarked, was to portray, to praise, to glorify, the worth of human love. "Love is divine," she said. "Sincere love is society's strongest bond."



ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM THÉOPHILE GAU-  
TIER.

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TOBACCO, PIPES, AND SMOKING AMONG  
THE TURKS.

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*From "Constantinople."*

Smoking is a necessity to the Turk; one could almost fancy it a part of his religion; and naturally, therefore, the shops of tobacconists and of venders of chibouques and amber mouth-pieces abound everywhere. The tobacco, cut very fine, and disposed in long, silky tufts, of a pale tint, is laid in masses upon shelves, and arranged with reference to its price and quality. The principal qualities are four in number: namely, *iavack* (sweet), *orta* (medium), *dokan-aklou* (piquant), and *sert* (strong); and are sold at from eighteen to twenty piastres (from 3s. 6d. to 4s. English) for an *ocque*—a quantity equivalent to about two pounds and a half. These tobaccos, of graduated strength, are smoked in chibouques, or rolled into cigarettes; the use of which last is beginning to be very general in Turkey.

The *tombeki*, a tobacco destined exclusively for the *narghilé*, comes from Persia. It is not cut like the other, but pressed, and broken in small morsels. It is of a darker color than the other kinds, and so strong that it can not be smoked until after two or three washings; and as it is liable to scatter, it is kept in glass jars, like a drug. Without *tombeki*, the *narghilé*, can not be smoked; and it is vexatious that this tobacco is very difficult to procure in Europe; because nothing is more delicious, or more favorable to poetic reverie, than to inhale, in gentle puffs, while seated upon the cushions of a divan, this perfumed smoke, freshened by the water through which it passes, and

which reaches you after traversing a large circle of tubing, in which you entwine your arm like an Arab snake-charmer playing with his serpents. It is the sybaritism of smoking, carried to the highest degree of perfection. Art itself contributes to the luxury of this delicate enjoyment; for there are *narghilés* of gold, of silver, and of cut steel; molded, carved, or engraved, with wonderful skill, and in forms as elegant as those of the purest antique vases; while garnets, turquoises, corals, and other stones even more precious, are employed to ornament them; so that one may smoke perfumed tobacco through a masterpiece of art; and I see nothing that even the most fastidious and aristocratic of duchesses could object to this "time-killer," which procures for sultans themselves the prolonged luxury of the kief (*siesta*), and a happy forgetfulness of the world, beside their fountains of marble, and beneath the trellis-work and vines of their kiosks.

The tobacconists of Constantinople are styled *tutungis*. They are, mostly, Greeks or Armenians, and have singularly engaging manners; and sometimes—especially during the nights of Ramadan—viziers, pashas, beys, and other dignitaries, lounge familiarly in their shops, to smoke, talk, and learn the news; sitting, the while, upon low stools, or the surrounding bales of tobacco.

It is a strange thing that tobacco, now in such universal use throughout the East, has been the subject of the severest interdiction on the part of many former sultans. More than one Turk has paid with his life for the luxury of smoking; and the ferocious Amurat IV. more than once made the head of the smoker fall with his pipe. Coffee, also, has had its not less sanguinary process of introduction at Constantinople, and has no less been honored by its fanatics and martyrs.

In the modern Byzantium, they now bestow the utmost care upon, and strain to the utmost point of luxury, all that concerns the pipe; the pleasure, above all others, of the modern Turk. The shops of the sellers of mouthpieces and stems of pipes are very numerous and well appointed. The most valued stems are those of cherrywood or jasmine; and they attain to very high prices, in proportion to their size, straightness, and perfection of quality.

A fine pipe-stem of cherry, with its bark unbroken, and of a



THÉOPHILE GAUTIER



dark lustre; or a shoot of jasmine, of which the knots are regularly distributed and of a bright color, will command as much as 500 piasters, or nearly £5.

I lingered long in front of the shop of one of these pipe-stem merchants, in the street which descends to Top-Hané, in front of the cemetery. The shopkeeper was an old man, with a superb gray beard, dark eyes, and aquiline nose. From the armhole of his waistcoat issued a thin, yellow arm, working a sort of bow, as if he had been playing a violin. Upon an iron drill, or gimlet, set in motion by this "bow," a pipe-stem of cherry was turning with wonderful rapidity, while undergoing the delicate operation of being bored, to serve its destined purpose. Near the old man, a young one (seemingly his son) was at work upon stems of lesser value; and a family of kittens played merrily in the sun, rolling themselves in the dust which fell from the pipe-stems. The wood not yet manufactured, and the stems already finished, lay stored in the shade at the farther end of the shop; and the whole formed a picture of the true Oriental stamp, worthy of any artist, but which might be found, with slight variations, framed at every street corner in Constantinople.

The manufactories of pipe-bowls are recognizable by the quantity of red dust sprinkled about them. An infinity of bowls of yellow clay (which becomes a deep pink by baking) await, ranged upon shelves, their turn for entrance to the oven. These bowls, of an exceedingly fine and soft material, upon which the potter imprints various ornamental designs, are not blacked, like the French pipes; and, when completed, are sold at amazingly low prices. The quantity of them consumed is incredible.

As to the amber mouthpieces, they are the object of a trade of their own, and which approaches to that of jewelry, by the value of the material and the expense incurred in working it. The amber comes chiefly from the Baltic, on the shore of which it is found more abundantly than anywhere else. At Constantinople, where it is very dear, the Turks prefer it of a pale lemon color, partly opaque, and desire that it should have neither spot, nor flaw, nor vein, conditions somewhat difficult to combine, and which greatly enhance the price of the mouthpieces. A perfect pair of them command as much as 8,000 or 10,000 piasters—from £70 to £90.

A collection of pipes worth 150,000 francs (£6,000) is not at all an unusual thing among the high dignitaries, or the richer private persons, in Istamboul. These precious mouthpieces are encircled with rings of gold, enameled, and often enriched with diamonds or rubies. It is, in fact, an Oriental mode of displaying the possession of wealth. All these pieces of amber—yellow, pale, or clouded, and of different degrees of transparency, polished, turned, and hollowed with the utmost care—acquire, in the rays of the sun, shades of color so warm and golden as would make Titian jealous, and inoculate with the desire of smoking the most resolute victim of “tobacco-phobia.” In the humbler shops, cheaper mouthpieces are to be found, having some almost imperceptible flaw or fault; but not the less perfectly performing their office, or being the less cool and pleasant to the lips.

There are imitations of amber, in Bohemian glass, of which enormous quantities are sold, at paltry prices; but they are used only by the Armenians and Greeks of the lowest class. No Turk who has any self-respect uses anything but the pure amber.

I hope that my fair readers will forgive all these details about pipes and tobacco, which, as a traveler, I can hardly forbear to give; for Constantinople is enveloped in a perpetual cloud of tobacco smoke, as dense as the vapor in which Homer makes his deities enwrap themselves.

## XIX. GEORGE SAND.

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The most fertile story-teller of all women that ever let their imagination trot as they held the pen is surely George Sand, who by birth was Lucile Aurore Dupin and by marriage Madame Dudevant, though best known by the name she chose and made famous everywhere. Yet her influence has been wider, much deeper, and far more constant than her literary popularity. She and her novels have been a factor in every changed relation of women to men during the last two generations. It is the simple truth to say that there is no woman to-day in France, England, or America, whose life she has not in some degree affected. And her influence has been steadily tonic, not, of course, in each phase of it taken by itself, but as a whole. In her art, as in her life, she scorned sometimes the restraints of social conventions, but she came through struggle to self-control at last.

All sorts of blood mingled in her infant veins. On the father's side were old and wealthy merchants, officials of the civil service, a famous general, an adventurous countess, and a distant strain of royalty. Her mother, on the other hand, was a dressmaker, daughter of a bird fancier, a plebeian of the plebeians. The marriage of her parents had been a sort of Bohemian romance. She was born in 1804, "among roses to the sound of dance music." Then all the contradictions of her ancestry were continued in her youthful training. She passed her girlhood in part with



her aristocratic grandmother in the beautiful country districts of Berry, partly with her democratic mother in Paris, partly at a convent. This last she left at sixteen, to marry at eighteen a country squire who managed her property admirably and completely neglected her heart.

She bore neglect as well as she could, and found some consolation in her two children. But independence was more to her than any conventional ease. Gradually after 1829 she came to live more and more apart, supporting herself by pen and pencil, till she was legally separated from her husband in 1836. It is important to any understanding of George Sand to bear this unfortunate marriage in mind. Its humiliations, its revelations, completed her novelistic outfit for the first period of her writing. They permeated like yeast this talent composed of intimate knowledge of aristocratic life, inherited democratic sympathies, close contact with nature, and convent-nursed religious aspirations. All these together blend in her first novel, "*Indiana*," published in 1832.

"*Indiana*" achieved immediate and sensational success, and naturally, for it came at a time of romantic mediævalism and stood in refreshing contrast to the artificial sentiment of "*Notre Dame*," and of "*Cinq Mars*." It offered the people and the manners of its own day. Here men talked and lived familiarly. We can hardly realize what an innovation this was at that date. George Sand is the mother of "naturalism" in French fiction, just as truly as Flaubert is its father.

This naturalistic note runs through all her novels, however much they may vary in other ways. They fill eighty-four volumes and we must content ourselves here with a general characterization. So considered, the novels fall into four groups or periods. The first extends to 1837. Its most characteristic stories are "*Lélia*" and "*Mauprat*,"

but they all give various phases of her own experience, and all assert an intense individualism. They are typical novels of domestic life, the lyric cries of the misunderstood wife, of genius beating its wings against the cage bars of social law and custom. She was herself morbid in those days and her novels are so. But it would be as unjust to judge George Sand by them as to condemn an apple tree because its spring fruit is green and sour. To the careful reader these early novels are interesting for the gradual modification that they exhibit in artistic processes. The author grows more balanced in her judgments, she learns to draw her characters with a firmer and a juster hand.

Then follows a second period. Fame and prosperity modify her youthful individualism into a socialistic altruism. For three years, from 1837 to 1840, her writing shows the arrested development that marks coming transformation, as one may see by reading with this idea in mind "*The Last Aldini*," or "*The Companion of the Tour de France*." Then the moment of crystallization comes, and for eight years she dazzles the world with her brilliant pleas for social revolution.

Of these socialistic novels "*The Miller of Angibault*" is the most radical, "*Consuelo*" the most famous. None of them is very readable to-day. But they are significant, for in their sympathetic study of the lower classes they are the first signs of the coming of the "topsy-turvy" naturalism of Zola. On George Sand their effect was to widen her heart and to chasten her sympathies. Even before the revolution of 1848 had shaken her from her socialistic reveries she had found an escape from the "problem novel" in country idyls of unmatched grace and of exquisite beauty. It is indeed difficult to speak with restrained praise of "*The Devil's Pool*," or of "*Little Fa-*

*dette*," or of "*François le Champi*," or of "*Teverino*." The gentle sympathy with the children of nature that pervades these books makes them masterpieces of rustic poetry, and carries their fragrance of wild thyme and sage from generation to generation.

But this exquisite vein gave scant hope to the intenser feelings of her nature that had found expression in the first period, and presently she developed a fourth manner that lasted from 1860 till her death in 1876. Here her earlier aspirations appear purified by experience. They seem to breathe a serener air. These are the novels that are most read and best worth reading to-day, for the idyls of which we have just spoken can hardly be called novels at all. The best by general consent is "*The Marquis of Villemer*," a most delightful study of French aristocracy. Excellent, too, in the delicacy of its psychology is "*Jean de la Roche*," and much pleasure may be got from "*Mademoiselle la Quintinie*," where, in the struggle of youth and maid between their religion and their love, we get as deep as George Sand is apt to take us into the recesses of the human heart.

For George Sand is never a profound psychologist. She feels deeply, but she does not often think clearly. Her women, energetic, resourceful like herself, are better than her men. Her young girls, timidly romantic and modestly coquettish, are best of all and thoroughly charming. Love is the mainspring of her novels. Love, sexual, parental, altruistic, alone for her gives meaning and value to existence. It is the motive of all effort, the inspiration of all struggle. This gives to her work a certain pride of passion, whose sacred rights override moral and social conventions, so that she is always at her best when her great heart is brought back to nature, as in her third period, or chastened by experience, as in her last years.

George Sand was of no literary school, and conscious of no rule but her story-telling instinct, which never deserted her even when higher inspiration failed. There is no artifice in her style. It is like herself—full, rounded, supple, mobile, almost always easy, but occasionally fiery, high-pitched, overemphatic, and now and then really eloquent. On the other hand, like most facile writers, she was carried at times by the stream of her words beyond the depth of her ideas, and became inexcusably prolix.

These minor defects it is easy to pardon when we consider the magnanimity of her purpose and the greatness of her achievement. There pulsed through all her being a splendid confidence in the power of the human will. Her optimism was fundamental, indomitable. She believed with all her soul in human nature and human goodness. "Others in our century," as Matthew Arnold has said, "may have been greater, wiser, purer, more poetic, but she is the most varied and the most attractive." "The immense vibration of her voice will not soon pass away. There will remain of her the sense of benefit and of stimulus from the passage upon earth of that large and frank nature, that large and pure utterance, the utterance of the early gods. There will remain an admiring and ever-widening report of that great soul, simple, affectionate, without vanity, without pedantry, human, equitable, patient, kind." Such was George Sand, who influenced with her pen the social thought of the world more than any other woman has ever done.

BENJAMIN W. WELLS.

University of the South.

## SELECTED STUDIES.

## I.

Going backward some fifteen or sixteen years from 1847, we find George Sand, toward the end of the winter of 1831, coming to establish herself at Paris, with her daughter's cradle and her very light baggage, consisting of some manuscripts scribbled at Nahant in the midst of the tumult of children. Without an acquaintance, without a supporter in the lettered world, she finds herself in the midst of this vast desert of men, some of them formidable rivals equipped for the struggle and ready to shut out the newcomer from all access to the publishers, the journals, and the reviews. I have often tried to imagine the state of mind of Baroness Aurora Dudevant, when at the age of twenty-seven years she came in complete ignorance of her powers, to seek her fortune, a voluntary refugee from home and from conjugal life, ready to attempt on her own account, and perhaps also for the instruction of others, a solution of that great problem, the absolute independence of woman. How complex already her nature! How many contradictory influences had met and mingled within her! To see her at her work-table in her attic of the Quai Saint Michel, muffled in her coarse gray frock coat, or to follow her with her friends of Berry to the Pinson restaurant, to the smoking-room, to the museums, to the concerts, to the pit of the theater on a first night, frankly curious concerning everything which interested the intelligent youth of that time—the literary and political incidents of the assembly, the club, the street—who would recognize in this somewhat boisterous student the mystic pupil of the English nuns, the humble and gentle friend of Sister Alicia, or again the shepherd girl of the Berry fields, the adventurous and visionary child of the heaths and woods? This smart young man who takes such gay evening promenades with a troop of hail fellows under

the lead of a vain and very old young man, Henri Delatouche, chief of the literary bohemia of that time—this vagabond observer, this new-fledged romancer, is a woman, very serious at heart, who has already known mortal sadness, who has lived much by sorrow (if sorrow gives life), who has suffered in all her deeper affections, who has been lacerated by all her family ties.—E. CARO in "*Great French Writers*."

## II.

To George Sand love is a divine essence. It contains happiness, even virtue. She has represented it as superior to social laws as well as the human will, not only stronger than worldly prejudices, but also more powerful than moral principles, and, like fire, purifying all it consumes.

She possessed charity, that virtue of virtues which opens the doors of Heaven. Upon human sufferings she poured all the treasures of an inexhaustible tenderness. To give her whole self was her vocation. Optimism and idealism are but a form of her native generosity; she loved humanity so much that she did not even see its vices and deformities. Kindness of heart was the foundation of her nature; she was kind, and she was so naturally.

She began to write novels for the purpose of earning her bread, and, without having so intended, became one of the greatest writers of her times. Indolent and passive by nature as a child, she consumed herself in long trances; she seemed like an "animal." Those who knew her at the epoch of "*Indiana*," "*Valentine*," and all those tempestuous romances that impassioned her contemporaries even to delirium, represent her as kind, inert, with rather dull, mild, tranquil eyes, and a wearied, listless manner. She is without esprit; she never grows animated; indeed, she seems to be between waking and sleeping. She speaks in a monotonous voice, using slow, calm gestures; there is something automatic about



her whole person. George Sand's genius is instinctive. All but a stranger to her own creations, she works like a somnambulist. Little matters to her the noise about her; she none the less pursues her task with calm security, as if writing from the dictation of some invisible master. She compares herself to a natural fountain. Her intimate friends employed an analogous comparison, even more expressive in its vulgarity. "Suppose," said one of them, "that you leave one of your spigots open; some one enters, interrupts you, and you close it; once the visitor departed, you have only to reopen it. That is like George Sand." She assigns her daily measure and fulfills it without erasing a word or finding it necessary to re-read her work. Her novel is finished at one o'clock in the morning, as runs the legend, and she begins another in the same breath. Composition can almost be said to be a purely mechanical function with her.—PELLISSIER.

### III.

After having "sown her wild oats," so to speak; after occupying attention with the story of her marriage and the scandal of her love affairs, George Sand herself begins to see that objective, impersonal, and disinterested observation, which is the very definition of the novel, also constitutes its value. With the facility for going to extremes characteristic of women, and with their tendency to obey the masculine influences that sway them for the time being, George Sand, guided at first by Lamennais, and afterward by Pierre Leroux, passes at a bound from the subjective or lyric to the social, and even the socialistic novel: with the result that the "*Péché de M. Antoine*" or the "*Compagnon du Tour de France*," if they be novels at all, are assuredly not good novels. Are those of Alexander Dumas, Frédéric Soulié and Eugène Sue any better? Their vulgarity admitted, they are at least better composed, more interesting and more dramatic; while Eugène Sue's works, to an equal or greater degree than George Sand's, help, by diverting





GEORGE SAND  
(Marie Dudevant)



attention from the miseries the romanticists had brought into such strong relief, to direct it to other sufferings, which are more real, deeper, and more cruel.—BRUNETIÈRE.

## IV.

To write novels was to her only a process of nature; she seated herself before her table at ten o'clock, with scarcely a plot, and only the slightest acquaintance with her characters; until five in the evening, while her hand guided a pen, the novel wrote itself. Next day and the next it was the same. By and by the novel had written itself in full, and another was unfolding. Not that she composed mechanically; her stories were not manufactured; they grew—grew with facility and in free abundance. At first a disciple of Rousseau and Chateaubriand, her theme was the romance of love. Her early novels are lyrical cries of a heart that had been wounded; protests against the crime of loveless marriage, against the tyranny of man, the servitude of woman; pleas for the individualism of the soul—superficial in thought, ill balanced in feeling, unequal in style, yet rising to passages of rare poetic beauty, and often admirable in descriptive power. The imagination of George Sand had translated her private experiences into romance; yet she, the spectator of her own inventions, possessed of a fund of sanity which underlay the agitations of her genius, while she lent herself to her creations, plied her pen with a steady hand from day to day.—DOWDEN.

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM GEORGE SAND.

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CAROLINE DE SAINT-GENEIX.

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*From "The Marquis de Villemer."\**

LETTER TO MADAME CAMILLE HEUDEBERT, AT D——, VIA. BLOIS.

Do not worry, dear sister, for here I am at Paris, without accident or fatigue. I have slept a few hours, breakfasted on a cup of coffee, made my toilet, and, in a moment, I am going to take a carriage to Madame d'Arglade's, that she may present me to Madame de Villemer. This evening I will write you the result of the solemn interview, but I want first to mail you these few words, that you may feel easy about my journey and my health.

Take courage with me, my Camille; all will go well. God does not abandon those who depend upon him, and who do their best to second his tender providence. What has been saddest for me in my resolution are your tears—yours and the dear little ones'; it is hard for me to restrain mine when I think of them; but you *must* see it was absolutely necessary. I could not sit with folded hands when you have four children to rear. Since I have courage and health, and no other claim upon me in this world than that of my tenderness for you and for those poor angels, it was for me to go forth and try to gain our livelihood. I will reach that end, be sure. Sustain me instead of

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\*" *The Marquis of Villemer* ' (1861) is George Sand's best novel of aristocratic life." PROFESSOR B.W.WELLS in "*A Century of French Fiction*." " *The Marquis of Villemer* " has for its heroine Caroline de Saint-Geneix, lady companion to the Marchioness of Villemer, one of the most delightful aristocratic figures in fiction." —PROFESSOR B. W. WELLS.

regretting me and making me weaker; that is all I ask of you. And with this, my much-loved sister, I embrace you and our dear children with all my heart. Do not make them weep by speaking to them of me; but try, nevertheless, not to let them forget me; that would pain me beyond measure.

CAROLINE DE SAINT-GENEIX.

January 3, 1845.

## SECOND LETTER—TO THE SAME.

Victory, great victory! my good sister. I have just returned from our great lady's, and—success un hoped for, as you shall see. Since I have one more evening of liberty, and that probably the last, I am going to profit by it in giving you an account of the interview. It will seem as if I were chatting with you again at the fireside, rocking Charley with one hand and amusing Lili with the other. Dear loves, what are they doing at this moment? They do not imagine that I am all alone in the melancholy room of a public house, for, in the fear of being troublesome to Madame d'Arglade, I put up at a little hotel; but I shall be very comfortable at the marchioness's, and this lone evening is not a bad one for me to collect myself and think of you without interruption. I did well, besides, not to count too much upon the hospitality which was offered me, because Madame d'Arglade is absent, and so I had to introduce myself to Madame de Villemer.

You asked me to give you a description of her: She is about sixty years old, but she is infirm and seldom leaves her arm-chair; that and her suffering face make her look fifteen years older. She could never have been beautiful, or comely of form; yet her countenance is expressive and has a character of its own. She is very dark; her eyes are magnificent, just a little hard, but frank. Her nose is straight and too nearly approaches her mouth, which is not at all handsome. Her mouth is ordinarily scornful; still, her whole face gleams and mellowes with a human sympathy when she smiles, and she smiles readily. My first impression agrees with my last. I believe this woman very good by principle rather than by impulse, and courageous rather than cheerful. She has intelligence and cul-

tivation. In fine, she does not differ much from the description which Madame d'Arglade gave us of her.

She was alone when I was conducted into her apartment. Gracefully enough she made me sit down close to her, and here is a report of our conversation:

"You have been highly recommended to me by Madame d'Arglade, whom I esteem very much indeed. I know that you belong to an excellent family, that you have talents and an honorable character, and that your life has been blameless. I have, therefore, the greatest wish that we may understand each other and agree. For that, there must be two things: one that my offer may seem satisfactory to you; the other that our views may not be too much opposed, as that would be the source of frequent misunderstandings. Let us deal with the first question. I offer you twelve hundred francs a year."

"So I have been told, Madame, and I have accepted."

"Have I not been told, too, that you would perhaps find that insufficient?"

"It is true that it is little for the needs of my situation; but Madame is the judge of her own affairs, and since I am here—"

"Speak frankly; you think that is not enough?"

"I can not say that. It is probably more than my services are worth."

"I am far from saying so, and you—you say it from modesty; but you fear that will not be enough to keep you? Do not let it trouble you; I will take everything upon myself; you will have no expense here except for your toilet, and in that regard I make no requirement. And do you love dress?"

"Yes, Madame, very much; but I shall abstain from it, because in that matter you make no requirement."

The sincerity of my answer appeared to astonish the marchioness. Perhaps I ought not to have spoken without restraint, as it is my habit to do. She took a little time to collect herself. Finally she began to smile, and said: "Ah, so! Why do you love dress? You are young, pretty, and poor; you have neither the need nor the right to bedizen yourself."

"I have so little right to do it," I answered, "that I go simply clad, as you see."

"That is very well, but you are troubled because your toilet is not more elegant?"

"No, Madame, I am not troubled about it at all, since it

must be so. I see that I spoke without reflection when I told you that I was fond of dress, and that has given you a poor idea of my understanding. I pray you to see nothing in that avowal but the effect of my sincerity. You questioned me concerning my tastes, and I answered as if I had the honor to be known to you; it was perhaps an impropriety, and I beg you to pardon it."

"That is to say," rejoined she, "if I knew you, I would be aware that you accept the necessities of your position without ill temper and without murmuring?"

"Yes, Madame; that is it exactly."

"Well, your impropriety, if it is one at all, is far from displeasing me. I love sincerity above all things; I love it perhaps more than I do understanding, and I make an appeal to your entire frankness. Now, what was it that persuaded you to accept such slight remuneration for coming here and keeping company with an infirm and perhaps tiresome old woman?"

"In the first place, Madame, I have been told that you are very intelligent and kind, and on that account I did not expect to find life tiresome with you; and then, even if I should have to endure a great deal, it is my duty to accept it all rather than to remain idle. My father having left us no fortune, my sister was at least well enough married, and I felt no scruples in living with her; but her husband, who had nothing but the salary of his place, recently died, after a long and cruel illness, which had absorbed all our little savings. It therefore naturally falls upon me to support my sister and her four children."

"With twelve hundred francs!" cried the marchioness. "No, that can not be. Ah! Madame d'Arglade did not tell me that. She, without doubt, feared the distrust which misfortune inspires; but she was very much mistaken in my case; your self-devotion interests me, and, if we can agree in other respects, I hope to make you sensible of my regard. Trust in me; I will do my best."

"Ah! Madame," I replied, "whether I have the good fortune to suit you or not, let me thank you for this good prompting of your heart." And I kissed her hand impulsively, at which she did not seem displeased.

"Yet," continued she, after another silence in which she appeared to distrust her own suggestion, "what if you are slightly frivolous and a little of a coquette?"



"I am neither the one nor the other."

"I hope not. Yet you are very pretty. They did not tell me that, either, and the more I look at you, the more I think you are even remarkably pretty. That troubles me a little, and I do not conceal it from you."

"Why, Madame?"

"Why? Yes, you are right. The ugly believe themselves beautiful, and, to the desire to please, they add the faculty of making themselves ridiculous. You would better, perhaps, have the art of pleasing—provided you do not abuse it. Well, now, are you good enough girl and strong enough woman to give me a little account of your past life? Have you had some romance? Yes, you have—haven't you? It is impossible that it could have been otherwise. You are twenty-two or twenty-three years old——"

"I am twenty-four, and I have had no other romance than the one of which I am going to tell you in two words. At seventeen I was sought in marriage by a person who pleased me, and who withdrew when he learned that my father had left more debts than capital. I was very much grieved, but I have forgotten it all, and I have sworn never to marry."

"Ah! that is spite, and not forgetfulness."

"No, Madame, that was an effort of the reason. Having nothing, but believing myself to be something, I did not wish to make a foolish marriage; and, far from having any spite, I have forgiven him who abandoned me. I forgave him especially the day when, seeing my sister and her four children in misery, I understood the sorrow of the father of a family who dies with the pain of knowing that he can leave nothing to his orphans."

"And you saw that ingrate again?"

"No, never. He is married, and I have ceased to think of him."

"And since then you have never thought of any other?"

"No, Madame."

"How have you done?"

"I do not know. I believe I have not had time to think of myself. When one is very poor, and does not want to give up to misery, the days are well filled out."

"But you have, nevertheless, been much sought after, pretty as you are—have you not?"

"No, Madame, no one has troubled me in that way. I do not believe in persecutions which are not at all encouraged."

"I think as you do, and I am satisfied with your manner of answering. Do you, then, fear nothing for yourself in the future?"

"I fear nothing at all."

"And will not this solitude of the heart make you sad or sullen?"

"I do not foresee it in any way. I am naturally cheerful, and I have preserved my command over myself in the midst of the most cruel tests. I have no dream of love in my head; I am not romantic. If I ever change, I shall be very much astonished. That, Madame, is all I can tell you about myself. Will you take me such as I represent myself with confidence, since I can, after all, but give myself out for what I know myself to be?"

"Yes, I take you for what you are—an excellent young woman, full of frankness and good-will. It remains to be seen whether you really have the little attainments that I require."

"What must I do?"

"Talk, in the first place; and upon that point I am already satisfied. And then you must read, and play a little music."

"Try me right away; and if the little I can do suits you——"

"Yes, yes," she said, putting a book into my hands, "do read; I want to be enchanted with you."

At the end of a page, she took the book away from me, with the remark that my reading was perfect. Then came the music. There was a piano in the room. She asked me if I could read at sight. As that is about all I can do, I could satisfy her again on that point. Finally she told me that, knowing my writing and my style of composition, from letters of mine which Madame d'Arglade had shown her, she considered that I would be an excellent secretary, and she dismissed me, giving me her hand, and saying many kind things to me. I asked her for one day—to-morrow—in order to see some people here with whom we are acquainted, and she has given orders that I should be installed Saturday——

Dear sister, I have just been interrupted. What a pleasant surprise! It is a note from Madame de Villemer—a note of three lines, which I transcribe for you:

"Permit me, dear child, to send you a trifle on account, for your sister's children, and a little dress for yourself. As you

are fond of dress, we must humor the weaknesses of those we like. It is arranged and understood that you are to have a hundred and fifty francs a month, and that I take upon myself to keep you in clothes."

How good and motherly that is—is it not? I see that I shall love that woman with all my heart, and that I had not estimated her, at first sight, as highly as she deserved. She is more impulsive than I thought. The five-hundred-franc bill I inclose in this letter. Make haste! Some wood in the cellar, some woolen petticoats for Lili, who needs them, and a chicken from time to time on that poor table. A little wine for you; your stomach is quite shattered, and it will take so little to restore it. The chimney must be repaired; it smokes atrociously: it is unbearable; it may weaken the children's eyes—and those of my little girl are so beautiful!

Really, I am ashamed of the dress which is intended for me—a dress of magnificent pearl-gray silk. Ah, how foolish I was to say that I liked to be well dressed! A dress for forty francs would have satisfied my ambition, and here I am attired in one worth two hundred, while my poor sister is repairing her rags. I do not know where to hide myself; but do not at least think that I am humiliated by receiving a present. I shall relieve my conscience of the burden of these kindnesses, my heart tells me. You see, Camille, everything succeeds with me as soon as I enter upon it. I light, the first thing, upon an excellent woman, I get more than I had agreed to take, and I am received and treated as a child whom it is desired to adopt and spoil. And then to think that you kept me back a whole six months, imposing an increase of privations upon yourself and tearing your hair at the idea of my working for you! Good sister, were you not then a bad mother? Ought not those dear treasures of children to have been considered above all things, and should they not have silenced even our own regard for each other? Ah! I was very much afraid of failure, nevertheless, I will confess to you now, when I took out of the house our last few louis for the expenses of my journey, at the risk of returning without having pleased this lady. God has been concerned in it, Camille; I prayed to him this morning with such confidence! I asked him so fervently to make me amiable, decorous, and persuasive. Now I am going to bed, for I am overcome with fatigue. I love you, my little sister, you know,

more than anything else in the world, and much more than myself. Do not grieve about me, then; I am just now the happiest girl that lives, and yet I am not with you and do not see our children as they sleep! You see, indeed, that there is no true happiness in selfishness, since, alone as I am, separated from all that I love, my heart beats with joy in spite of my tears, and I am going to thank God upon my knees before I fall asleep.

CAROLINE.

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While Mlle. de Saint-Geneix was writing to her sister, the Marchioness de Villemer was talking with the youngest of her sons in her little drawing-room in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. The house was large and respectable; yet the marchioness, formerly rich and now in very narrow circumstances—we shall soon see why—had of late occupied the second floor in order to turn the first to account.

“Well, dear mother,” said the marquis, “are you satisfied with your new companion? Your people have told me that she has arrived.”

“My dear child,” answered the marchioness, “I have but one word to say of her, and that is that she has bewitched me.”

“Really? Tell me about it.”

“Upon my word, I am not too sure that I dare. I am afraid of turning your head in advance.”

“Fear nothing,” was the sorrowful reply of the marquis, whom his mother had tried to win into a smile; “even if I were so easy to inflame, I know too well what I owe to the dignity of your house and to the repose of your life.”

“Yes, yes, my dear; I know, too, that I can be at ease upon a question of honor and delicacy when it is with you that I have to do; I can also tell you that the little d’Arglade has found for me a pearl—a diamond—and that, to commence with, this phoenix has led me into follies.”

The marchioness gave an account of her interview with Caroline, and described her thus: “She is neither tall nor short; she is well formed, has pretty little feet, the hands of a child, abundant, light, blond hair, a complexion of lilies and roses, perfect features, pearly teeth, a decided little nose, large sea-green eyes, which look straight at you unflinchingly, without

dreaminess, without false timidity, with a candor and a confidence which please and engage; nothing of a provincial, she has manners which are excellent because they do not seem to be manners at all; much taste and gentility in the poverty of her attire; in a word, all that I feared and yet nothing that I feared; that is, beauty which inspired me with distrust, and none of the affectations and pretensions which would have justified that distrust; and, more, a voice and pronunciation which make real music of her reading, sterling talent as a musician, and, above all that, every indication of mind, sense, discretion, and good-nature: to such an extent that, interested and carried away by her devotion to a poor family to which I see plainly she is sacrificing herself, I forgot my projects of economy, and have engaged to give her the eyes out of my head."

"Has she been bargaining with you?" demanded the marquis

"Quite the contrary; she was satisfied to take what I had determined to give her."

"In that case you did well, mother, and I am glad that you have at last a companion worthy of you. You have kept too long that hungry and sleepy old maid who worried you, and when you have a chance to replace her by a treasure, you would do very wrong to count the cost."

"Yes," replied the marchioness, "that's what your brother also says; neither he nor you care to count the cost, my dear children, and I fear I have been too hasty in the satisfaction which I have just given myself."

"That satisfaction was necessary to you," said the marquis, with spirit, "and you ought the less to reproach yourself with it since you have yielded to your need of performing a good action."

"I acknowledge it, but I was wrong, perhaps," replied the marchioness, with a careworn expression; "one has not always the right to be charitable."

"Ah! my mother," cried the son, with a mingling of indignation and sadness, "when you are forced to deny yourself the joy of giving alms, the injury that I have done will be very great!"

"The injury! You? What injury?" rejoined the mother, astonished and troubled; "you have never done an injury, my dear son."

"Pardon me," said the marquis, greatly moved. "I was to

blame the day I engaged, out of respect to you, to pay my brother's debts."

"Hush!" cried the marchioness turning pale. "Let us not speak of that, we would not understand each other." She extended her hands to the marquis to lessen the involuntary bitterness of this answer. The marquis kissed his mother's hands and retired shortly afterward.

The next day, Caroline de Saint-Geneix went out to mail, with her own hands, the registered letter which she sent to her sister.

## XX. THE SOCIOLOGIST IN FRENCH FICTION.

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The writings of Balzac constitute the most extraordinary body of fiction in the whole range of imaginative literature. They are unique. There are many who believe that the genius that produced these writings was the greatest genius, the most original, the most comprehensive and versatile, that ever devoted itself to the composition of imaginative prose. There are, indeed, those who recognize in it a power and a comprehensiveness less only than the power and comprehensiveness of Shakespeare. They admit that Balzac was a less artist than Shakespeare, and a far less poet. But they assert that they see in Balzac's creations a reality, both psychic and physical, scarcely less great than Shakespeare's, with on the whole almost as great a range of production, and within that range a far greater variety.

If the world in general has not as yet altogether arrived at this opinion concerning Balzac it is gradually approximating thereto. As in the case of many other men of genius, it began by misunderstanding Balzac. Then for years, while partly understanding him, it failed to value him. Even to-day in England scarcely higher praise is heard of Balzac than that for so short a life his achievement was prodigious. Mr. Saintsbury says of him that "his scheme of human character is altogether low and mean." Professor Dowden says of him that "his philosophy is often pretentious and vulgar." Andrew Lang says



of him that "he is fond of dwelling on the morbid pathology of human nature." Of course these eminent critics understand the real Balzac, and on the whole praise him duly. But it is their qualifications rather than their praise that the English general public have got hold of; and few Englishmen, not of the class of critics, would ever dream it possible to do as M. Taine and M. Brunetière have done, and as some eminent American critics are doing, namely, compare Balzac seriously with Shakespeare.

It is not probable, however, that Balzac will ever be read with the delight that Shakespeare is read. Whether Shakespeare had a conscious theory, a purposeful intention in his art, we scarcely know. If he had, it would be a very different one from that which Balzac had. And this brings us to the point we have principally in view in the construction of this paper.

Balzac's theory was that fiction should be the history of social life. As for himself he wished to be "the secretary of his epoch;" to get together such a series of "human documents" as would accurately represent to future ages the sociologic character of the age in which he lived. "The old civilizations," he said, "have passed away, and left the history of their manners and morals untold. I hope to do for France and for the nineteenth century what one could wish had been done for Rome and Athens and Memphis and India in the ages of their glory."

This purpose Balzac set about accomplishing in a way that was in harmony with the spirit of his age, for his genius was akin with it. It was an age of romanticism. Balzac was a romanticist, in freshness and fervidness of imagination equal to any romanticist of his time, and he is never happier or more powerful than when dealing with the grotesque, the extraordinary, the improbable, the apparently unreal. But it was also an age of scientific in-

quiry and investigation and the demonstration of hypotheses; the age of Cuvier and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and of an incoming Darwin; an age when all natural phenomena were examined for classification under general types; an age when the relations of individuals to general types, and the causes of the differentiation of types into individuals, were profoundly considered. Balzac looked upon human society as an assemblage of an infinite number of individuals; but he saw also that these individuals could be classified under an ascertainable number of general types. He (in effect) said: "I will examine these individual units of society and see how they are related to and differ from one another. In this way I shall be able to classify them and arrange them under general types. Then I will describe these general types, and describe them so exactly and accurately that their descriptions shall be to all times 'documents' that none can gainsay. And I will show these types acting and reacting upon one another just as individuals do in real life. In this way I shall examine, classify, describe, and portray, the whole human life of my time. Society as it has existed during the period of my observations will be completely represented by my types, and one knowing these types will know the whole social phenomena of the age."

The presentation of these types in a real way so that they should appear in the action of the novel as living human beings was of course where Balzac showed his art. The types, it is true, were sometimes only types, mere abstractions in paper and ink. But in hosts of instances they were as living and human as any to be found in literature. In the presentation of them Balzac used not only his imagination, but what perhaps was of more account, his immense power of observation and of study. The whole social life of France of his day was parceled out. There

was country life and city life; the life of the peasantry, the life of the bourgeoisie, and the life of the aristocracy. There was also the life of different professions, such as the law, the church, the army. Each of these divisions in turn he took for examination, analysis, and representation. If in his portraiture, he found that individual parts were missing, he turned to his canvas again and supplied them. In this way he introduced to literature whole classes of society, whole lists of occupations, previously unknown to it. As he proceeded he found that his creations constituted a community, and so he treated them. He made them act and react upon one another, just as the individual units they represented acted and reacted upon one another in real life, and so made story after story and book after book. His work thus became, what he intended it should become, namely, an abridgment of humanity, a microcosmos, a documentary presentation of the totality of the social life of his time.

To say that Balzac succeeded in doing all this perfectly would be to say that he possessed a genius a thousand times more astonishing than any ever yet given to mortals. Perfection of execution in such a design was of course impossible. To have conceived it was almost enough for any one man. But the splendor of Balzac's achievement lay not merely in what he conceived, but in what he actually accomplished. He built a structure the most astonishingly largely planned and many-chambered that the human mind has ever attempted. And though his structure is not all well built, though many faults may be found with it both as to its utility and as to its beauty, it will ever remain the world's most splendid monument of the audacity of genius.

For splendidly audacious Balzac's scheme was. It is not probable that it will ever again be attempted. Even were

such a genius to arise again, it would scarcely happen that it would be couched in a body possessing such physical powers as Balzac possessed. Such a combination of mental vigor and bodily vigor as existed in Balzac is indeed rare in the world's history.

Balzac of course had his limitations, or rather his disqualifications for the task he essayed. He had little sentiment for humor, and so it happened that the humorous phases of life have scarcely any representation in his pages. His mind essentially delighted in the weird, the strange, the fanciful, the grotesque, and his work is biased in these directions. He was to some extent a poet, and to a greater extent an artist, and life, the exact, documentary life he essayed to portray, is rarely a thing of either art or poetry. Life, too, is not so wholly indecorous, sordid, diseased, and loathsome as Balzac in much of his portraiture has represented it to be. This is what critics are thinking of when they say that "his scheme of life is low and mean," and that "he is fond of dwelling on the pathologic and the morbid."

Yet, after making all the allowances one should, it still remains that Balzac's fiction is what he intended it to be, a sociologic portraiture of humanity. In this Balzac had no antecessors, and he probably never will have imitators. His position in the world of literature, therefore, is unique. His greatness, such as it is, is without equal and without parallel.

## XXI. BALZAC.

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The greatest figure in French fiction and possibly in the French literature of the nineteenth century is Balzac. He was born in 1799, trained for the law, but felt from youth a vocation for letters, from which no discouragements availed to divert him. At twenty he sought to earn a livelihood by anonymous romances, with which he wisely refused to burden his mature reputation, and at thirty he began that unique achievement in fiction, "*The Human Comedy*," whose fifty volumes were produced under a combined pressure of debt and extravagance that would have lamed any genius less commanding than his own, and which brought him to a premature grave at the age of fifty-one.

Balzac said that he undertook to compose for France in the nineteenth century that history of morals that the old civilizations of Greece, Rome, and Egypt had left untold. He would be the secretary of that society, draw up the inventory of its virtues and vices, lay bare the greed and social ambition that seemed to him the mainspring of its multiplex activities. To this end he created some 2,000 characters, many of whom, to be sure, only cross the stage, while others are of such stuff as dreams are made of. Yet a surprising number remain that have an astonishing individuality of flesh and blood, and it was with no exaggeration that Taine called "*The Human Comedy*" "the greatest storehouse of documents on human nature since Shakespeare."

It is impossible here to attempt to guide the reader into all the chambers of this monumental building of titanic imagination and industry, but we must give some idea of its general plan before we can attempt to show its character or to estimate its author's genius. The well-nigh hundred stories are divided by Balzac into groups that deal with Parisian, provincial, rural, military, and private life, and to these he adds further groups of analytic and philosophic studies.

The scenes of private life are naturally stories of ideals, of illusions, of tentative efforts of young men, of maidenly ingenuousness, and of motherly pride. The emotion here is usually less strong, the characters less complex, yet the group counts Balzac's supreme tale of horror, "*The Great Bastion*."

In provincial life Balzac found a broader canvas for the more normal types of human nature. Here the significant little facts of his exact realistic method appear in brilliant descriptions, while money replaces love as the mainspring of action. The finest novel in this group, "*Eugénie Grandet*," is one of the greatest studies of avarice in all literature. Noteworthy, too, is "*The Curate of Tours*" for its insight into Roman Catholic clerical life, and "*The Lily in the Valley*" contains passages of description that are unsurpassed in any modern literature.

But it is by his Parisian scenes that Balzac exercised the greatest influence on the development of realism, and here he won his greatest fame in "*Cousine Bette*," "*Cousin Pons*," "*Lost Illusions*," "*Père Goriot*," and "*The Splendors and Miseries of Courtesans*." Here, too, are found the most striking creations of character—Vautrin, Rastignac, Rubempré, Marsy, Madame Marneffe, Gobseck, Remonencq, Hulot, and others more than there is space even to name as they crowd to the memory.



The scenes of rural, political, and military life are by comparison less striking, but this is not to say that they do not contain novels that might outweigh the whole literary baggage of many another author, and short stories of intense vividness, like "*A Passion in the Desert*," of deep moral force like "*An Episode Under the Terror*," or of Christian aspiration like "*The Reverse of Contemporary History*," which last counts in Madame de la Chanterie one of the noblest women that novelist ever created. This story was the last written by Balzac, and his friends may be content to have it so, for in it the human comedy rises to august nobility. It has its "inferno" and its "purgatorio," but it ends, like Dante's poem, with a beatific vision.

Balzac's analytic studies are immature and call for little notice. We may pass also in silence his dramas and the somewhat vulgar humor of the "*Droll Stories*," which are no part of the Human Comedy. The "*Philosophic Studies*," on the other hand, contain Balzac's most thoughtful work, mystic sometimes, but often strangely fascinating. Of these "*The Wild Ass's Skin*" is best known, but some choice spirits will always prefer "*Jesus Christ in Flanders*," and yet others find the transcendent expressions of Balzac's genius in "*Séraphita*." But indeed this genius is so manifold that no one book can give it adequate scope, nor can any critic devise for it a comprehensive formula.

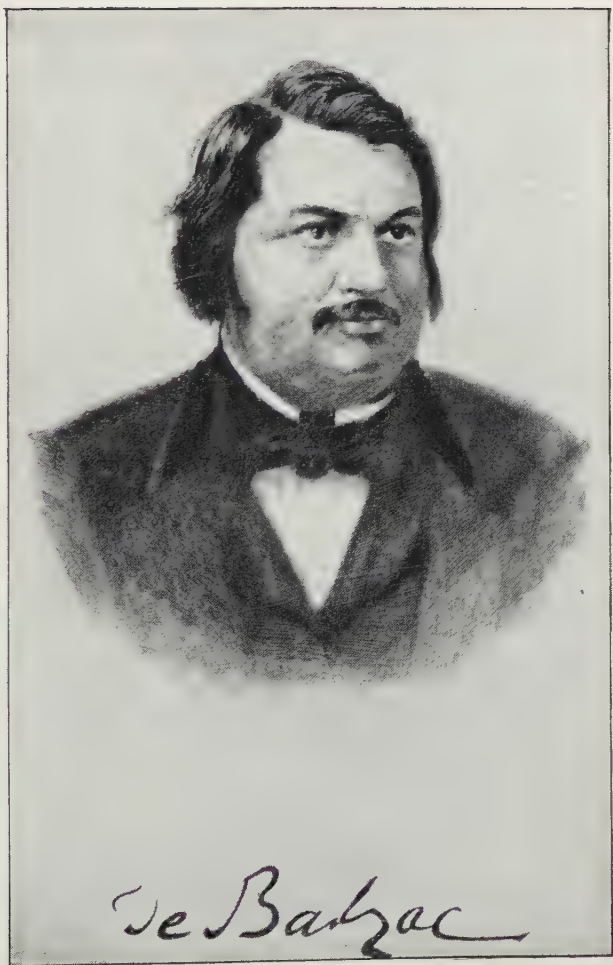
The dominant trait in Balzac, whether we consider his style, his imagination, or his thought, is exuberant virility. In this he reflects the struggle of the human mind in his generation, as in ours, with an ever-widening sea of things to be known, of forces to be conquered, of complex interests to be reconciled. He was wholly of the world, yet he dominated it. Nothing human was foreign to him—neither grossness, nor sensuality, nor luxury, nor the passion of



the artist and the dilettante—and yet, perhaps because of this very intensity of physical and material life, he was haunted with questions of social and political economy, of morals, of religion, and of mysticism. To say, with Henry James, that the mainspring of the Human Comedy is the five-franc piece is to see only one side, and that the lowest side, of its character. “Balzac,” says Taine, “puts into his novels politics, psychology, metaphysics, and all the legitimate and spurious children of philosophy. Many are fatigued by it, and reject ‘*Séraphita*’ and ‘*Louis Lambert* ;’ but they should observe that these works terminate the whole, just as the flower terminates the plant ; that the genius of the artist finds here its complete expression and final evolution ; that all the rest prepares for them, explains them, presupposes them, justifies them.”

Balzac’s style was sometimes heavy, but this was due rather to over-elaboration than to carelessness. Here, as so often, the style is the man. It seeks less to convey thoughts in logical sequence than to suggest images in picturesque succession. It is suggestive, stimulating, thrilled throughout with creative imagination, and in its highest flights, as in the description of the bouquet in “*The Lily in the Valley*,” almost intoxicating. On the other hand, it is often commonplace and occasionally dull. There is little sparkle in the conversations, little repartee or fencing of wit, and what there is is not always of the best.

In construction, the novels as stories will seem ill-proportioned, but not so if we look at them as studies of character. They are slow in gaining headway, but once started they seldom lose momentum. The descriptions of scene and person, of street, house, room, furniture, clothes, seem wearisomely minute. We can almost count the steps of Grandet’s stairway, and the flyspecks on the walls of Goriot’s boarding-house ; and yet, if we have patience at the



HONORÉ DE BALZAC



outset, the ultimate effect of this is to make Balzac's figures real to a degree that no other novelist attains, unless it be his pupil Flaubert in "*Madame Bovary*," and in "*Sentimental Education*." Zola has sought to rival him, but, as we shall see, his strength lies elsewhere.

Balzac is greater in character than in plot. We remember the actors long after we have forgotten the story. Most of his persons are realistic studies from life; but perhaps the most interesting are the few who stand out as symbolic of social tendencies and of the forces that move the modern world. Such are Vautrin, Philippe Bridau, Madame Marneffe, Old Grandet, Louis Lambert, Séraphita, and many others that nurse and widen the scope of the imagination as it is given only to the greatest creative artists to do. It is these that put Balzac in the category of Shakespeare and Goethe in his genius, though he is far below them as an artist.

Balzac combines in his philosophy of life the materialist and the mystic. He sought the answers to the riddles of existence in his intuitions, and gave such glimpses of them as he perceived. He tried to see life steadily and whole, to correlate all the material, social, and moral factors that compose it, and to bring all into relation to supersensual intuitions, a task in which none has yet succeeded, and perhaps none ever will. Yet that a novelist made the attempt was to add to the dignity of fiction, and that he prosecuted the quest with unremitting energy for more than twenty years makes him worthy of admiring recognition. But to lofty ambition and unremitting toil Balzac added the touch of genius that, as the greatest of French poets, Victor Hugo, said at his grave, disclosed in sudden revelations the most sombre and tragic ideals of life, that dug into and sounded the depths of the abyss that is in every heart, and then could rise from those terrible analyses of human

character that had made Molière melancholy and Rousseau a misanthrope, still smiling in serene calm. He is unique in the annals of fiction the world over. No novelist has seen into life so deeply or embraced so much of it in the scope of his vision as Honoré de Balzac.

BENJAMIN W. WELLS

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Honoré de Balzac, by common consent the greatest of French novelists, and to many of his admirers the greatest of all writers of prose fiction, was born at Tours, May 16, 1799. Neither his family nor his place of birth counts for much in his artistic development; but his sister Laure, afterward Madame Surville—to whom we owe a charming sketch of her brother and many of his most delightful letters—made him her hero through life, and gave him a sympathy that was better than any merely literary environment.—WILLIAM P. TRENT.

### II.

There is something gross in Balzac's genius; he has little wit, little delicacy, no sense of measure, no fine self-criticism, no lightness of touch, small insight into the life of refined society, an imperfect sense of natural beauty, a readiness to accept vulgar marvels as the equivalent of spiritual mysteries; he is monarchical without the sentiment of chivalric loyalty, a Catholic without the sentiment of religion; he piles sentence on sentence, hard and heavy as the accumulated stones of a cairn. Did he love his art for its own sake? It must have

been so; but he esteemed it also as an implement of power, as the means of pushing toward fame and grasping gold.—DOWDEN.

### III.

Be it added that love—I say love, and not women—does not occupy a larger place in his books than is actually accorded to it in real life, while he gives hatred, vanity, ambition, avarice, and all the passions, their due importance. It would be difficult again to praise too highly his astonishingly exact and minute descriptions, or rather inventories, his “resuscitations” of periods and places, even his vivid sketches of fashions which, although they lasted but a year or only a few months, have been immortalized by the master’s laborious but powerful art. Whether better novels have ever been written, or ever will be written, than “*Eugénie Grandet*,” “*Ursule Mirouet*,” “*Le Curé de Village*” or “*Le Cousin Pons*” I can not say, but there are no novels like them in existence. But it is time to employ the only word that meets the case, while its application to Balzac will determine its true meaning and prevent it from being falsely interpreted, as has too often been done. Balzac’s attitude toward his characters or the subject he is writing about is that of the naturalist toward the animal or the plant he is studying. It is a patient and attentive attitude, an attitude “subservient to its object” and uninfluenced by any preconceived personal notions. He does not give us his impressions; it is reality, and reality in its entirety that he strives to grasp, as is indicated by the spacious lines on which his work is designed.—BRUNETIÈRE,

### IV.

Does good, then, find no place in Balzac’s works? There are, indeed, honest characters among the innumerable personages who play the Human Comedy, but

they are almost always represented as unconsciously so. Balzac does not believe in moral liberty. He makes man an irresponsible agent, a combination of blind forces. In his eyes, virtue, as well as vice, is quite instinctive. Since our instincts fatally tend toward the conservation and aggrandizement of our being, he considers it but one variety of that egotism which is the very essence of human nature. In *Biroteau* it shows itself in native stupidity; in *Père Goriot* it represents a morbid affection. Balzac's true sphere, and that in which he feels at ease, is the world of business, intrigue, and scandal, where corrupt bankers, disreputable politicians, and dependent gentlemen triumph—the world whose king is a bohemian, whose queen a courtesan, with money for its god. This conflict of cupidity and ambition arouses the lowest instincts of human nature. Launched in the quest of power and fortune, these very instincts develop an energy of passion in which the vigorous nature of the novelist shows itself. Solely attracted by force, and with no moral preoccupation whatever, Balzac makes that force, which he admires in itself, serve to further the interests and satisfy the appetites of all his characters.

This lack of the ideal in his conception of life and society is united with a certain native vulgarity. Massive and awkward, with strongly marked features and a heavy voice, there was something powerful but rough hewn in his whole person. He lacks tact and bearing. He is represented singing, gesticulating, "tapping his stomach," incapable of repressing the outbursts of a fiery temperament, in fact, quite the opposite of that cold, correct gentleman Mérimée was and wished to seem. He possesses a coarse, jovial breadth, a thoroughly candid, exorbitant pride. He is a life-loving, expansive good fellow. He jests clumsily, and laughs loudly at his own pleasantries. Everything is colored by his personality. His Rabelaisian vivacity vents itself in broad jokes, and his coffee-house philosophy finds expression in coarse apothegms. There is something of Gaudissart about him.—PELLISSIER.



## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM BALZAC.

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### EUGÉNIE GRANDET'S LOVE.

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*From "Eugénie Grandet." \**

When the four relations were left alone, Monsieur Grandet said to his nephew:

"We must go to bed. It is too late to talk about the matters which have brought you here; to-morrow we will take a suitable moment. We breakfast at eight o'clock; at midday we eat a little fruit or a bit of bread, and drink a glass of white wine; and we dine, like the Parisians, at five o'clock. That's the order of the day. If you like to go and see the town and the environs, you are free to do so. You will excuse me if my occupations do not permit me to accompany you. You may perhaps hear people say that I am rich—Monsieur Grandet this, Monsieur Grandet that. I let them talk; their gossip does not hurt my credit. But I have not a penny; I work in my old age like an apprentice whose worldly goods are a bad plane and two good arms. Perhaps you'll soon know yourself what a franc costs when you have got to sweat for it. Nanon, where are the candles?"

"I trust, my nephew, that you will find all you want," said Madame Grandet; "but if you should need anything else, you can call Nanon."

"My dear Aunt, I shall need nothing; I have, I believe, brought everything with me. Permit me to bid you good-night, and my young cousin, also." Charles took a lighted wax candle

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\* " '*Eugénie Grandet*' is one of the most remarkable studies of avarice in all literature, and its heroine is Balzac's most exquisite feminine creation."—PROFESSOR B. W. WELLS.

from Nanon's hand—an Anjou candle, very yellow in color, and so shopworn that it looked like tallow and deceived Monsieur Grandet, who, incapable of suspecting its presence under his roof, did not perceive this magnificence.

“I will show you the way,” he said.

Instead of leaving the hall by the door which opened under the archway, Grandet ceremoniously went through the passage which divided the hall from the kitchen. A swing-door, furnished with a large, oval pane of glass, shut this passage from the staircase, so as to fend off the cold air which rushed through it. But the north wind whistled none the less keenly in winter, and, in spite of the sandbags at the bottom of the doors of the living-room, the temperature within could scarcely be kept at a proper height. Nanon went to bolt the other door; then she closed the hall and let loose a wolf-dog, whose bark was so strangled that he seemed to have laryngitis. This animal, noted for his ferocity, recognized no one but Nanon; the two untutored children of the fields understood each other.

When Charles saw the yellow, smoke-stained walls of the well of the staircase, where each wormeaten step shook under the heavy footfall of his uncle, his expectations began to sober more and more. He fancied himself in a hen-roost. His aunt and cousin, to whom he turned an inquiring look, were so used to the staircase that they did not guess the cause of his amazement, and took the glance for an expression of friendliness, which they answered by a smile which made him desperate.

“Why the devil did my father send me to such a place?” he said to himself.

When they reached the first landing, he saw three doors, painted in Etruscan red and without casings—doors sunk in the dusty walls and provided with iron bars, which, in fact, were bolts, each ending with the pattern of a flame, as did both ends of the long sheath of the lock. The first door at the top of the staircase, which opened into a room directly above the kitchen, was evidently walled up. In fact, the only entrance to that room was through Grandet's bedchamber; the room itself was his office. The single window which lighted it, on the side of the court, was protected by a lattice of strong, iron bars. No one, not even Madame Grandet, had permission to enter it. The old man chose to be alone, like an alchemist in his laboratory. There, no doubt, some hiding-place had been ingeniously con-

structed; there the title-deeds of property were stored; there hung the scales with which to weigh the louis; there were devised, by night and secretly, the estimates, the profits, the receipts, so that business men, finding Grandet prepared at all points, imagined that he got his cue from fairies or demons; there, no doubt, while Nanon's loud snoring shook the rafters; while the wolf-dog watched and yawned in the courtyard; while Madame and Mademoiselle Grandet were quietly sleeping, came the old cooper\* to cuddle, to con over, to caress and clutch and clasp his gold. The walls were thick, the screens sure. He alone had the key of this laboratory, where—so people declared—he studied the maps on which his fruit trees were marked, and calculated his profits to a vine, and almost to a twig.

The door of Eugénie's chamber was opposite to the walled-up entrance to this room. At the other end of the landing were the apartments of the married pair, which occupied the whole front of the house. Madame Grandet had a room next to that of Eugénie, which was entered through a glass door. The master's chamber was separated from that of his wife by a partition, and from the mysterious strong-room by a thick wall. Père Grandet lodged his nephew on the second floor, in the high, mansard attic which was above his own bedroom, so that he might hear him if the young man took it into his head to go and come. When Eugénie and her mother reached the middle of the landing they kissed each other for good-night; then with a few words of adieu to Charles, cold upon the lips, but certainly very warm in the heart of the young girl, they withdrew into their own chambers.

"Here you are in your room, my nephew," said Père Grandet, as he opened the door. "If you need to go out, call Nanon; without her, beware! the dog would eat you up without a word. Sleep well. Good-night. Ha! Why, they have made you a fire!" he cried.

At this moment Nanon appeared with the warming-pan.

"Here's something more!" said Monsieur Grandet. "Do you take my nephew for a lying-in-woman? Carry off your brazier, Nanon!"

"But, Monsieur, the sheets are damp, and this gentleman is as delicate as a woman."

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\* Grandet from his previous occupations is called both cooper and winegrower.

"Well, go on, as you've taken it into your head," said Grandet, pushing her by the shoulders; "but don't set things on fire." So saying, the miser went downstairs, grumbling indistinct sentences.

Charles stood aghast in the midst of his trunks. After casting his eyes on the attic-walls covered with that yellow paper sprinkled with bouquets so well known in dance-houses, on the fireplace of ribbed stone, whose very look was chilling; on the chairs of yellow wood with varnished cane seats, that seemed to have more than the usual four angles; on the open night-table, capacious enough to hold a small sergeant-at-arms; on the meager bit of rag-carpet beside the bed; on the tester whose cloth valance shook as if, devoured by moths, it was about to fall, he turned gravely to *la Grande Nanon*\* and said:

"Look here! my dear woman, just tell me—am I in the house of Monsieur Grandet, formerly Mayor of Saumur, and brother to Monsieur Grandet of Paris?"

"Yes, Monsieur; and a very good, a very kind, a very perfect gentleman. Shall I help you to unpack your trunks?"

"Faith! yes, if you will, my old trooper. Didn't you serve in the marines of the Imperial Guard?"

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Nanon. "What's that—the marines of the guard? Is it salt? Does it go in the water?"

"Here, get me my dressing-gown out of that valise; there's the key."

Nanon was wonder-struck by the sight of a dressing-gown made of green silk, brocaded with gold flowers of an antique design.

"Are you going to put that on to go to bed with?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Holy Virgin! What a beautiful altar-cloth it would make for the parish church! My dear, darling Monsieur, give it to the church, and you'll save your soul; if you don't, you'll lose it. Oh, how nice you look in it! I must call *mademoiselle* to see you."

"Come, Nanon, if Nanon you are, hold your tongue; let me go to bed. I'll arrange my things to-morrow. If my dressing-gown pleases you so much, you shall save your own soul. I'm too good a Christian not to give it to you when I go away, and you can do what you like with it."

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\*So called because of her great size.

Nanon stood rooted to the ground, gazing at Charles and unable to put faith in his words.

"Good-night, Nanon."

"What in the world have I come here for?" thought Charles as he went to sleep. "My father is not a fool; my journey must have some object. Pshaw! put off serious thought till the morrow, as some Greek idiot said."

"Blessed Virgin! how charming he is, my cousin!" Eugénie was saying, interrupting her prayers, which that night at least were never finished.

Madame Grandet had no thoughts at all as she went to bed. She heard the miser walking up and down his room through the door of communication, which was in the middle of the partition. Like all timid women, she had studied the character of her lord. Just as the petrel foresees the storm, she knew by imperceptible signs when an inward tempest shook her husband; and at such times, to use an expression of her own, she "feigned dead."

Grandet gazed at the door lined with sheet iron which he had lately put to his sanctum, and said to himself:

"What a crazy idea of my brother to bequeath his son to me! A fine legacy! I have not fifty francs to give him. What are fifty francs to a dandy who looked at my barometer as if he meant to make firewood of it!"

In thinking over the consequences of that legacy of anguish, Grandet was perhaps more agitated than his brother had been at the moment of writing it.\*

"I shall have that golden robe," thought Nanon, who went to sleep tricked out in her altar-cloth, dreaming for the first time in her life of flowers, embroidery, and damask, just as Eugénie was dreaming of love.

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\* When Charles Grandet came from Paris to Saumur, he brought with him a letter from his father to his uncle, in which his father announced first, that he had become bankrupt owing to the bankruptcies and defalcations of his broker and his notary; and second, that in consequence of this ruin he had determined to commit suicide. "When you hold this letter in your hands, I shall be no longer living." At the same time he begged his brother to take care of Charles. "My brother, if I were writing with my blood, with my tears, no greater anguish could I put into this letter—nor as great, for then I should weep, I should bleed, I should die, I should suffer no more; but now I suffer and look at death with dry eyes. From henceforth you are my son's father; he has no other relations. . . . Oh, my unhappy son! My son! Listen, Grandet! I implore nothing for myself—but for my son! Brother, my suppliant hands are clasped as I think of you; behold them! Grandet, I confide my son to you in dying, and I look at the means of death with less pain as I think that you will be to him a father." Of course Charles Grandet as yet knows nothing of this, nor Eugénie, nor Madame Grandet.

In the pure and monotonous life of young girls, there comes a delicious hour when the sun sheds its rays into their soul, when the flowers express their thoughts, when the throbbings of the heart send upward to the brain their fertilizing warmth and melt all thoughts into a vague desire—day of innocent melancholy and of dulcet joys! When babes begin to see, they smile; when a young girl first perceives the sentiment of nature, she smiles as she smiled when an infant. If light is the first love of life, is not love a light to the heart? The moment to see within the veil of earthly things had come for Eugénie.

An early riser, like all provincial girls, she was up betimes and said her prayers, and then began the business of dressing—a business which henceforth was to have a meaning. First, she brushed and smoothed her chestnut hair and twisted its heavy masses to the top of her head with the utmost care, preventing the loose tresses from straying, and giving to her head a symmetry which heightened the timid candor of her face; for the simplicity of these accessories accorded well with the innocent sincerity of its lines. As she washed her hands again and again in the cold water which hardened and reddened the skin, she looked at her handsome, round arms and asked herself what her cousin did to make his hands so softly white, his nails so delicately curved. She put on new stockings and her prettiest shoes. She laced her corset straight, without skipping a single eyelet. And then, wishing, for the first time in her life, to appear to advantage, she felt the joy of having a new gown, well made, which rendered her attractive.

As she finished her toilet, the clock of the parish church struck the hour; to her astonishment it was only seven. The desire of having plenty of time for dressing carefully had led her to get up too early. Ignorant of the art of retouching every curl and studying every effect, Eugénie simply crossed her arms, sat down by the window, and looked at the courtyard, the narrow garden, and the high, terraced walls that overtopped it: a dismal, hedged-in prospect, yet not wholly devoid of those mysterious beauties which belong to solitary or uncultivated nature. Near the kitchen was a well surrounded by a curb, with a pulley fastened to a bent iron rod clasped by a vine, whose leaves were withered, reddened, and shriveled by the season. From thence the tortuous shoots straggled to the wall, clutched it, and ran



the whole length of the house, ending near the woodpile, where the logs were arranged with as much precision as the books in a library. The pavement of the courtyard showed the black stains produced in time by lichens, herbage, and the absence of all movement or friction. The thick walls wore a coating of green moss streaked with waving brown lines, and the eight stone steps at the bottom of the courtyard which led up to the gate of the garden were disjointed and hidden beneath plants, like the tomb of a knight buried by his widow in the days of the Crusades. Above a foundation of moss-grown, crumbling stones was a trellis of rotten wood, half fallen from decay; over them clambered and intertwined at will a mass of clustering creepers. On each side of the latticed gate stretched the crooked arms of two stunted apple trees. Three parallel walks, graveled and separated from each other by square beds, where the earth was held in by box-borders, made the garden, which terminated, beneath a terrace of the old walls, in a group of lindens. At the farther end were raspberry bushes; at the other, near the house, an immense walnut tree drooped its branches almost into the window of the miser's sanctum.

A clear day and the beautiful autumnal sun common to the banks of the Loire were beginning to melt the hoar-frost which the night had laid on these picturesque objects, on the walls, and on the plants which swathed the garden and the courtyard. Eugénie found a novel charm in the aspect of things lately so insignificant to her. A thousand confused thoughts came to birth in her mind and grew there, as the sunbeams grew without along the wall. She felt that impulse of delight, vague, inexplicable, which wraps the moral being as a cloud wraps the physical body. Her thoughts were all in keeping with the details of this strange landscape, and the harmonies of her heart blended with the harmonies of nature. When the sun reached an angle of the wall where the "Venus-hair" of southern climes drooped its thick leaves, lit with the changing colors of a pigeon's breast, celestial rays of hope illumined the future to her eyes, and thenceforth she loved to gaze upon that piece of wall, on its pale flowers, its blue harebells, its wilting herbage, with which she mingled memories as tender as those of childhood. The noise made by each leaf as it fell from its twig in the void of that echoing court gave answer to the secret ques-



tionings of the young girl, who could have stayed there the livelong day without perceiving the flight of time. Then came tumultuous heavings of the soul. She rose often, went to her glass, and looked at herself, as an author in good faith looks at his work to criticise it and blame it in his own mind.

"I am not beautiful enough for him!" Such was Eugénie's thought—an humble thought, fertile in suffering. The poor girl did not do herself justice; but modesty, or rather fear, is among the first of love's virtues. Eugénie belonged to the type of children with sturdy constitutions, such as we see among the lesser bourgeoisie, whose beauties always seem a little vulgar; and yet, though she resembled the Venus of Milo, the lines of her figure were ennobled by the softer Christian sentiment which purifies womanhood and gives it a distinction unknown to the sculptors of antiquity. She had an enormous head, with the masculine yet delicate forehead of the Jupiter of Phidias, and gray eyes, to which her chaste life, penetrating fully into them, carried a flood of light. The features of her round face, formerly fresh and rosy, were at one time swollen by the small-pox, which destroyed the velvet texture of the skin, though it kindly left no other traces, and her cheek was still so soft and delicate that her mother's kiss made a momentary red mark upon it. Her nose was somewhat too thick, but it harmonized well with the vermilion mouth, whose lips, creased in many lines, were full of love and kindness. The throat was exquisitely round. The bust, well curved and carefully covered, attracted the eye and inspired reverie. It lacked, no doubt, the grace which a fitting dress can bestow; but to a connoisseur the non-flexibility of her figure had its own charm. Eugénie, tall and strongly made, had none of the prettiness which pleases the masses; but she was beautiful with a beauty which the spirit recognizes, and none but artists truly love. A painter seeking here below for a type of Mary's celestial purity, searching womankind for those proud, modest eyes which Raphael divined; for those virgin lines, often due to chances of conception, which the modesty of Christian life alone can bestow or keep unchanged—such a painter, in love with his ideal, would have found in the face of Eugénie the innate nobleness that is ignorant of itself; he would have seen beneath the calmness of that brow a world of love; he would have felt, in the shape of the

eyes, in the fall of the eyelids, the presence of the nameless something that we call divine. Her features, the contour of her head, which no expression of pleasure had ever altered or wearied, were like the lines of the horizon softly traced in the far distance across the tranquil lakes. That calm and rosy countenance, margined with light like a lovely, full-blown flower, rested the mind, held the eye, and imparted the charm of the conscience that was there reflected. Eugénie was standing on the shore of life where young illusions flower, where daisies are gathered with delights ere long to be unknown; and thus she said, looking at her image in the glass, unconscious as yet of love: "I am too ugly; he will not notice me."

Then she opened the door of her chamber which led to the staircase, and stretched out her neck to listen for the household noises. "He is not up," she thought, hearing Nanon's morning cough as the good soul went and came, sweeping out the halls, lighting her fire, chaining the dog, and speaking to the beasts in the stable. Eugénie at once went down and ran to Nanon, who was milking the cow.

"Nanon, my good Nanon, make a little cream for my cousin's breakfast."

"Why, Mademoiselle, you should have thought of that yesterday," said Nanon, bursting into a loud peal of laughter.

"I can't make cream. Your cousin is a darling, a darling! oh, that he is! You should have seen him in his dressing-gown, all silk and gold! I saw him, I did! He wears linen as fine as the surplice of monsieur le curé."

"Nanon, please make us a *galette*."

"And who'll give me wood for the oven, and flour and butter for the cakes?" said Nanon, who in her function of prime minister to Grandet assumed at times enormous importance in the eyes of Eugénie and her mother. "Musn't rob the master to feast the cousin. You ask him for butter and flour and wood; he's your father, perhaps he'll give you some. See! there he is now, coming to give out the provisions."

Eugénie escaped into the garden, quite frightened as she heard the staircase shaking under her father's step. Already she felt the effects of that virgin modesty and that special consciousness of happiness which lead us to fancy, not, perhaps, without reason, that our thoughts are graven on our foreheads

and are open to the eyes of all. Perceiving for the first time the cold nakedness of her father's house, the poor girl felt a sort of rage that she could not put it in harmony with her cousin's elegance. She felt the need of doing something for him—what, she did not know. Ingenuous and truthful, she followed her angelic nature without mistrusting her impressions or her feelings. The mere sight of her cousin had wakened within her the natural yearnings of a woman—yearnings that were the more likely to develop ardently because, having reached her twenty-third year, she was in the plenitude of her intelligence and her desires. For the first time in her life her heart was full of terror at the sight of her father; in him she saw the master of her fate, and she fancied herself guilty of wrongdoing in hiding from his knowledge certain thoughts. She walked with hasty steps, surprised to breathe a purer air, to feel the sun's rays quickening her pulses, to absorb from their heat a moral warmth and a new life. As she turned over in her mind some strategem by which to get the cake, a quarrel—an event as rare as the sight of swallows in winter—broke out between la Grande Nanon and Grandet. Armed with his keys, the master had come to dole out provisions for the day's consumption.

"Is there any bread left from yesterday?" he said to Nanon.

"Not a crumb, Monsieur."

Grandet took a large, round loaf, well floured and moulded in one of the flat baskets which they use for baking in Anjou, and was about to cut it, when Nanon said to him:

"We are five, to-day, Monsieur."

"That's true," said Grandet, "but your loaves weigh six pounds; there'll be some left. Besides, these young fellows from Paris don't eat bread, you'll see."

"Then they must eat *frippe*?" said Nanon.

*Frippe* is a word of the local lexicon of Anjou, and means any accompaniment of bread, from butter which is spread upon it, the commonest kind of *frippe*, to peach preserves, the most distinguished of all the *frippe*s; those who in their childhood have licked the *frippe* and left the bread will comprehend the meaning of Nanon's speech.

"No," answered Grandet, "they eat neither bread nor *frippe*; they are something like marriageable girls."

After ordering the meals for the day with his usual parsi-

mony, the good man, having locked the closets containing the supplies, was about to go toward the fruit-garden, when Nanon stopped him to say:

"Monsieur, give me a little flour and some butter, and I'll make a *galette* for the young ones."

"Are you going to pillage the house on account of my nephew?"

"I wasn't thinking any more of your nephew than I was of your dog—not more than you think yourself; for, look here, you've only forked out six bits of sugar. I want eight."

"What's all this, Nanon? I have never seen you like this before. What have you got in your head? Are you the mistress here? You shan't have more than six pieces of sugar."

"Well, then, how is your nephew to sweeten his coffee?"

"With two pieces; I'll go without myself."

"Go without sugar at your age! I'd rather buy you some out of my own pocket."

"Mind your own business."

In spite of the recent fall in prices, sugar was still, in Grandet's eyes, the most valuable of all the colonial products; to him it was always six francs a pound. The necessity of economizing it, acquired under the empire, had grown to be the most inveterate of his habits. All women, even the greatest ninnies, know how to dodge and double to get their ends; Nanon abandoned the sugar for the sake of getting the *galette*.

"Mademoiselle!" she called through the window, "do you want some *galette*?"

"No, no," answered Eugénie.

"Come, Nanon," said Grandet, hearing his daughter's voice, "see here." He opened the cupboard where the flour was kept, gave her a cupful, and added a few ounces of butter to the piece he had already cut off.

"I shall want wood for the oven," said the implacable Nanon.

"Well, take what you want," he answered sadly; "but in that case you must make us a fruit-tart, and you'll cook the whole dinner in the oven. In that way you won't need two fires."

"Goodness!" cried Nanon, "you needn't tell me that."

Grandet cast a look that was well-nigh paternal upon his faithful deputy.

"Mademoiselle," she cried when his back was turned, "we shall have the *galette*."

Père Grandet returned from the garden with the fruit and arranged a plateful on the kitchen table.

"Just see, Monsieur," said Nanon, "what pretty boots your nephew has. What leather! Why it smells good! What does he clean it with, I wonder? Am I to put your egg-polish on it?"

"Nanon, I think eggs would injure that kind of leather. Tell him you don't know how to black morocco; yes, that's morocco. He will get you something himself in Saumur to polish those boots with. I have heard that they put sugar into the blacking to make it shine."

"They look good to eat," said the cook, putting the boots to her nose. "Bless me! if they don't smell like madame's eau-de-cologne. Ah! how funny!"

"Funny!" said her master. "Do you call it funny to put more money into boots than the man who stands in them is worth?"

"Monsieur," she said, when Grandet returned the second time, after locking the fruit-garden, "won't you have the *pot-au-feu* put on once or twice a week on account of your nephew?"

"Yes."

"Am I to go to the butcher's?"

"Certainly not. We will make the broth of fowls; the farmers will bring them. I shall tell Cornoiller to shoot some crows; they make the best soup in the world."

"Isn't it true, Monsieur, that crows eat the dead?"

"You are a fool, Nanon. They eat what they can get, like the rest of the world. Don't we all live on the dead? What are legacies?"

Monsieur Grandet, having no further orders to give, drew out his watch, and, seeing that he had half an hour to dispose of before breakfast, he took his hat, went and kissed his daughter, and said to her:

"Do you want to come for a walk in the fields, down by the Loire? I have something to do there."

Eugénie fetched her straw bonnet, lined with pink taffeta; then the father and daughter went down the winding street to the shore.

"Where are you going at this early hour?" said Cruchot, the notary, meeting them.

"To see something," answered Grandet, not duped by the matutinal appearance of his friend.

When Père Grandet went to "see something," the notary knew by experience there was something to be got by going with him; so he went.

"Come, Cruchot," said Grandet, "you are one of my friends. I'll show you what folly it is to plant poplar trees on good ground."

"Do you call the sixty thousand francs that you pocketed for those that were in your fields down by the Loire, folly?" said Maître Cruchot, opening his eyes with amazement. "What luck you have had! To cut down your trees at the very time they ran short of white wood at Nantes, and to sell them at thirty francs!"

Eugénie listened, without knowing that she approached the most solemn moment of her whole life, and that the notary was about to bring down upon her head a paternal and supreme sentence. Grandet had now reached the magnificent fields which he owned on the banks of the Loire, where thirty workmen were employed in clearing away, filling up, and leveling the spots formerly occupied by the poplars.

Eugénie, who was gazing at the sublime scenery of the Loire, and paying no attention to her father's reckonings [Grandet had been making some calculations respecting the poplar trees for Cruchot], presently turned an ear to the remarks of Cruchot when she heard him say:

"So you have brought a son-in-law from Paris. All Saumur is talking about your nephew. I shall soon have the marriage contract to draw up, hey! Père Grandet?"

"You g-g-got up very early to t-t-tell me that," said Grandet, accompanying the remark with a motion of his wen. "Well, old c-c-comrade, I'll be frank, and t-t-tell you what you want t-t-to know. I would rather, do you see, f-f-ling my daughter into the Loire than g-g-give her to her c-c-cousin. You may t-t-tell that everywhere—no, never mind; let the world t-t-talk!"\*

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\* To stammer was one of Grandet's mannerisms—assumed when to do so suited his purpose.



This answer dazzled and blinded the young girl with sudden light. The distant hopes upspringing in her heart bloomed suddenly, became real, tangible, like a cluster of flowers, and she saw them cut down and wilting on the earth. Since the previous evening she had attached herself to Charles by all those links of happiness which bind soul to soul; from henceforth suffering was to rivet them. Is it not the noble destiny of women to be more moved by the dark solemnities of grief than by the splendors of fortune? How was it that fatherly feeling had died out of her father's heart? Of what crime had Charles been guilty? Mysterious questions! Already her dawning love, a mystery so profound, was wrapping itself in mystery. She walked back trembling in all her limbs; and when she reached the gloomy street, lately so joyous to her, she felt its sadness, she breathed the melancholy which time and events had printed there. None of love's lessons lacked. A few steps from their own door, she went on before her father and waited at the threshold. But Grandet, who saw a newspaper in the notary's hand, stopped short and asked:

"How are the Funds?"

"You never listen to my advice, Grandet," answered Cruchot. "Buy soon; you will still make twenty per cent. in two years, besides getting an excellent rate of interest—five thousand a year for eighty thousand francs fifty centimes."

"We'll see about that," answered Grandet, rubbing his chin.

"Good God!" exclaimed the notary.

"Well, what?" cried Grandet; and at the same moment Cruchot put the newspaper under his eyes and said:

"Read that!"

Monsieur Grandet, one of the most respected merchants in Paris, blew his brains out yesterday, after making his usual appearance at the Bourse. He had sent his resignation to the president of the Chamber of Deputies, and had also resigned his functions as a judge of the commercial courts. The failures of Monsieur Roguin and Monsieur Souchet, his broker and his notary, had ruined him. The esteem felt for Monsieur Grandet and the credit he enjoyed were, nevertheless, such that he might have obtained the necessary assistance from other business houses. It is much to be regretted that so honorable a man should have yielded to momentary despair, etc.



"I knew it," said the old winegrower to the notary.

The words sent a chill of horror through Maître Cruchot, who, notwithstanding his impassibility as a notary, felt the cold running down his spine as he thought that Grandet of Paris had possibly implored in vain the millions of Grandet of Saumur.

"And his son, so joyous yesterday——"

"He knows nothing as yet," answered Grandet, with the same composure.

"Adieu! Monsieur Grandet," said Cruchot, who now understood the state of the case and went off to reassure Monsieur de Bonfons.

On entering, Grandet found breakfast ready. Madame Grandet, round whose neck Eugénie had flung her arms, kissing her with the quick effusion of feeling often caused by secret grief, was already seated in her chair on castors, knitting sleeves for the coming winter.

"You can begin to eat," said Nanon, coming downstairs four steps at a time; "the young one is sleeping like a cherub. Isn't he a darling with his eyes shut? I went in and I called him: no answer."

"Let him sleep," said Grandet; "he'll wake soon enough to hear ill-tidings."

"What is it?" asked Eugénie, putting into her coffee the two little bits of sugar weighing less than half an ounce which the old miser amused himself by cutting up in his leisure hours. Madame Grandet, who did not dare to put the question, gazed at her husband.

"His father has blown his brains out."

"My uncle?" said Eugénie.

"Poor young man!" exclaimed Madame Grandet.

"Poor indeed!" said Grandet; "he isn't worth a sou!"

"Eh! poor boy, and he's sleeping like the king of the world!" said Nanon in a gentle voice.

Eugénie stopped eating. Her heart was wrung, as the young heart is wrung when pity for the suffering of one she loves overflows, for the first time, the whole being of a woman. The poor girl wept.

"What are you crying about? You didn't know your uncle,"

said her father, giving her one of those hungry, tigerish looks he doubtless threw upon his piles of gold.

"But, Monsieur," said Nanon, "who wouldn't feel pity for the poor young man, sleeping there like a wooden shoe, without knowing what's coming."

"I didn't speak to you, Nanon. Hold your tongue!"

Eugénie learned at that moment that the woman who loves must be able to hide her feelings. She did not answer.

"You will say nothing to him about it, Ma'ame Grandet, till I return," said the old man. "I have to go and straighten the line of my hedge along the highroad. I shall be back at noon, in time for the second breakfast, and then I will talk with my nephew about his affairs. As for you, Mademoiselle Eugénie, if it is for that dandy you are crying, that's enough, child. He's going off like a shot to the Indies. You will never see him again."

The father took his gloves from the brim of his hat, put them on with his usual composure, pushed them in place by shoving the fingers of both hands together, and went out.

"Mamma, I am suffocating!" cried Eugénie, when she was alone with her mother; "I have never suffered like this."

Madame Grandet, seeing that she turned pale, opened the window and let her breathe fresh air.

"I feel better!" said Eugénie, after a moment.

This nervous excitement in a nature hitherto, to all appearance, calm and cold, reacted on Madame Grandet; she looked at her daughter with the sympathetic intuition with which mothers are gifted for the objects of their tenderness, and guessed all. In truth, the life of the Hungarian sisters, bound together by a freak of nature, could scarcely have been more intimate than that of Eugénie and her mother—always together in the embrasure of that window, and sleeping together in the same atmosphere.

"My poor child!" said Madame Grandet, taking Eugénie's head and laying it upon her bosom.

At these words, the young girl raised her head, questioned her mother by a look, and seemed to search out her inmost thought.

"Why send him to the Indies?" she said. "If he is unhappy, ought he not to stay with us? Is he not our nearest relation?"

"Yes, my child, it seems natural; but your father has his reasons: we must respect them."

The mother and daughter sat down in silence, the former upon her raised seat, the latter in her little armchair, and both took up their work. Swelling with gratitude for the full heart-understanding her mother had given her, Eugénie kissed the dear hand, saying:

"How good you are, my kind Mamma!"

The words sent a glow of light into the motherly face, worn and blighted as it was by many sorrows.

"You like him?" asked Eugénie.

Madame Grandet only smiled in reply. Then, after a moment's silence, she said, in a low voice: "Do you love him already? That is wrong."

"Wrong?" said Eugénie. "Why is it wrong? You are pleased with him. Nanon is pleased with him; why should he not please me? Come, Mamma, let us set the table for his breakfast."

She threw down her work, and her mother did the same, saying, "Foolish child!" But she sanctioned the child's folly by sharing it. Eugénie called Nanon.

"What do you want now, Mademoiselle?"

"Nanon, can we have cream by midday?"

"Ah! midday, to be sure you can," answered the old servant.

"Well, let him have his coffee very strong; I heard Monsieur des Grassins say that they make the coffee very strong in Paris. Put in a great deal."

"Where am I to get it?"

"Buy some."

"Suppose monsieur meets me?"

"He has gone to his fields."

"I'll run, then. But Monsieur Fessard asked me yesterday if the Magi had come to stay with us when I bought the wax candle. All the town will know our goings-on."

"If your father finds it out," said Madame Grandet, "he is capable of beating us."

"Well, let him beat us; we will take his blows on our knees."

Madame Grandet, for all answer, raised her eyes to Heaven. Nanon put on her hood and went off. Eugénie got out some clean table-linen, and went to fetch a few bunches of grapes

which she had amused herself by hanging on a string across the attic; she walked softly along the corridor, so as not to waken her cousin, and she could not help listening at the door to his quiet breathing.

"Sorrow is watching while he sleeps," she thought.

She took the freshest vine-leaves and arranged her dish of grapes as coquettishly as a practiced housekeeper might have done, and placed it triumphantly on the table. She laid hands on the pears counted out by her father, and piled them in a pyramid mixed with leaves. She went and came, and skipped and ran. She would have liked to lay under contribution everything in her father's house; but the keys were in his pocket. Nanon came back with two fresh eggs. At sight of them Eugénie almost hugged her round the neck.

"The farmer from Lande had them in his basket. I asked him for them, and he gave them to me, the darling, for nothing, as an attention."

## XXII. THE NATURALISTS IN FRENCH FICTION.

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In the middle third of the nineteenth century the dominant feature of the imaginative literature of France was romanticism, and certain aspects or phases of romanticism have ever since remained prominent characteristics of that literature. But the mode of thought, the ideal of art, which above all others has been the dominant feature of French imaginative literature in the present or last third of the century is "naturalism."

Naturalism is sometimes confounded with realism. But naturalism differs from realism in this way: Realism refers mainly to the methods employed by the literary artist in the achievement of his object; naturalism includes his whole conception of art, not only his methods but his aims. In a general way it may be said that all naturalists are realists, but it can not be said that all realists are naturalists.

Balzac, for example, was in the main a realist. But he was not in the main a naturalist. In the prosecution of his art he portrayed things as he saw them, exactly, photographically. But in his ideal of art he felt himself concerned with the moral relation of effects to causes; that is to say, with the quality of human action as exemplified under the great determining influences of heredity, environment, opportunity, and the like. He was an artist, but he was a philosopher as well.

But the true naturalist is not a philosopher and makes no pretention to be one. He is not concerned with the moral relation of effects and causes. He is concerned only with phenomena and their sequences as such. He has no thesis to prove, no precept to enforce. He neither commends nor condemns. "As to giving my opinion about the personages in my novels," said Flaubert, "no, no; a thousand times no! I do not admit my right to an opinion."

What, then, is the objective purpose of the naturalist? What does he seek to do? What does he seek to effect?

His purpose is simply to portray life. Not objective life merely, or material life; but psychic life, moral life. "Fiction," said Goncourt, "is the history of contemporary morals."

But is there no final motive, no determining cause, impelling the naturalist to choose one subject of study rather than another?

The true naturalist denies the necessity of any such motive. He is concerned only in producing an impression. "Art for art's sake," is his one guiding principle.

This principle or ideal of art, "art for art's sake," was indeed first put forward by one who was not a naturalist proper, but an avowed romanticist, Théophile Gautier. But the phrase was soon adopted by the naturalists as an expression of their theory, and it is indeed the best brief expression of their theory that it is possible to give. It contains, in the germ, every element of their theory.

First, the naturalist represents things only that are outside of himself. He is therefore not an individualist. "Art," said Flaubert, "consists in representation, and we should confine ourselves to representation." "Write what you see," said Goncourt.

The true naturalist, therefore, is not only not an individ-

ualist; he is in no sense an idealist. Also, he can not even be a romanticist, for romanticism deals with the extraordinary phases of life and with these dissociated from their real significances. In one sense the naturalist is a classicist; but unlike the classicist his range of choice is unlimited. The whole of life, every aspect of life, the life of the degraded and the morally corrupt, as well as all other, becomes material for his portraiture. "No classes are too unworthy," said Goncourt, "no misfortunes too lowly, no catastrophes too ignoble."

Second, the naturalist endeavors to portray things, not as they may seem, but as they really are. What is before him, he says, is not his to distort or misrepresent in any way, even with good intention. The facts of life, if they are facts, should remain so forever. In other words, he tries to realize in his art the rigidity of the methods of science. "Art and science," said Leconte de Lisle, "should tend to absolute identification."

Third, the naturalist endeavors to portray things impassively. He aims to be perfectly impersonal. "Art," said Flaubert, "should have nothing in common with the artist." "The poet," said Leconte de Lisle, "should look at human things as a god might look at them from the heights of Olympus, maintaining absolute indifference."

Having then no purpose to serve but an artistic one, and compelled by their scientific aims to be precise and exact, the naturalists became, what the romanticists had failed to be, namely, careful and painstaking stylists. Flaubert, indeed, went so far as to say that: "A mere assemblage of words," if made with a certain care, "had a beauty of its own." While this may not be true, it was still true that that great artist, by his unceasing painstaking, and his sense of sound and form, was one of those who brought back to French literature a grace and power it once pos-



sessed, but for some time had lost. In the words of Brunetière: "A generation of artists succeeded a generation of improvisators."

It is FLAUBERT (1821-1880) that the avowed school of naturalists in French fiction generally regard as their founder. Flaubert's theory of art was indeed precise and definite. "Art for art's sake" was his guiding principle, and he acknowledged no end in fiction but the artistic one, and no methods but those that were rigidly scientific. But Flaubert, by reason of inherited and other influences, was quite as much a romanticist as a naturalist, quite as much an idealist as a realist. His work therefore is but the connecting link between the old order of things and the new. In his style, however, Flaubert belongs wholly to the later school.

The Goncourts—EDMOND DE GONCOURT (1822-1895) and JULES DE GONCOURT (1830-1869)—are perhaps the real founders of the naturalistic school. Their joint novel, "*Germinie Lacerteux*," published in 1865, was years later pronounced by Edmond Goncourt "the model of all that has since been constructed under the name of realism or naturalism," and so it has generally been regarded. The publication of this novel was indeed an epochal event in the history of French literature. It was the first instance in fiction of the presentation of "a slice of crude life" as an achievement of literary art. With it the novel first became an instrument in the investigation of the psychic and moral phenomena of the lowest classes of society. Humanity was seen to be a thing of mire and muck as well as of superior strata. The way was opened, the pace was set, the word was given, for the all-embracing humanistic portraiture of Zola.

Naturalism has had but few poets. LECONTE DE LISLE (1818-1894), the most conspicuous poet France has had

during the last half of the century, was, however, an avowed and militant naturalist. Art for art's sake, the denial of a final purpose in art, the love of beauty as a thing in itself divine, the regard for style as a thing in itself ad-



EDMOND DE GONCOURT.

mirable, the impersonality of the artist, the identification of art with science, were all so many points in his conscious and acknowledged theory.

The greater naturalists—Daudet, Zola, and Guy de Maupassant—have still to be mentioned, but these will

have separate treatment. Yet even to mention these great names recalls the fact that naturalism, like every other theory of art, has had its infinitude of exemplification. As was the case with romanticism, naturalism had scarcely begun to exist as a definite working theory before it began to show signs of differentiation.

Maupassant is perhaps the typical naturalist. An artist without flaw, an observer without error, he saw in art no moral function, nor in life no illuminating explanation. At times, through what seems to have been a sort of hysterical reaction, he became somewhat idealistic and romantic in his art, but the only personal note that was dominant with him was one of hopeless pessimism. And in the end that note overpowered him.

Daudet was not at first a naturalist; nor was he an uncompromising naturalist at any time. He was ever hovering on the ideal; ever feeling the impulses to hope and perfectibility of an innate, unrestrainable optimism. He is thus one whose philosophy of life, vague though it be, is something people catch and carry with them, because it gives them hope.

Zola, uncompromising realist though he be, has still the constructive imagination and natural impulses of a great romanticist. But life, to Zola, is a terribly sad and real thing. And, naturalist though he be, he has not viewed it with the naturalist's selfish and uncaring impersonality. If an evil is to be removed it must be seen and felt. Zola makes us see and feel how much of life is evil. It is for us now to help to remove the evil.

Naturalism is devoid of objective purpose. But such a theory of art can never long be held by the ardent spirits of any age. DE VIGNY (1799-1864), though one of the earliest romanticists, in time ceased to be one. But he never became a naturalist. "I am an epic moralist," he

said. And these words express what many another great soul of the century, despite the influence of naturalism, has essayed to be.

Art can not long be dissociated from morals. The ethical spirit of an age will in time make itself felt, whether art wills it or not. "What is art without the hearts and intelligences to which it ministers?" exclaimed George Sand; and that is the underlying feeling that sustains the work of most great artists. "We are lost," said Dumas the younger, "if we do not hasten to press our art into the service of the great social reforms and the great hopes of humanity." "All literature," he said again, "the aim of which is not perfectibility, moralization, the ideal, in a word, the useful, is a weakly, unwholesome, still-born literature."

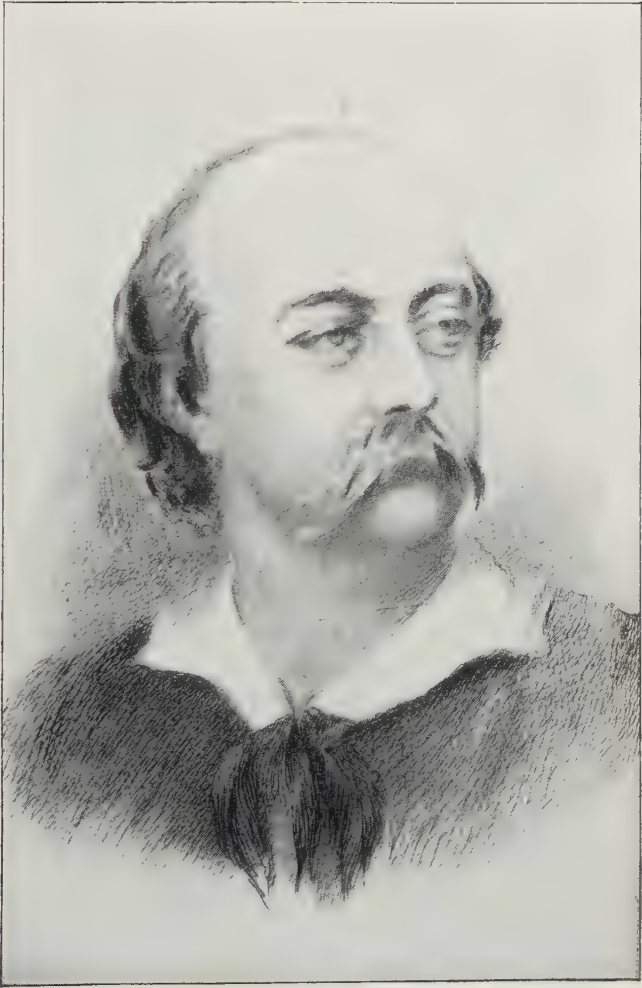
But the last word shall be from Taine, Taine who was himself for many years the main upholder of the naturalistic creed, although in the end he acknowledged the fruitlessness of that creed: "The value of a work of art is the degree in which its character makes for good."

### XXIII. FLAUBERT.

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GUSTAVE FLAUBERT was born in Rouen in 1821. His father was a renowned physician of that city who wrote many valuable treatises on medical science. It is not unlikely that Gustave was brought up in a home in which the materialism of the eighteenth century still survived, sustained by a great interest in physiological studies. It is quite natural that he should have shared the opinions of the liberals who, at that time, were hoping to explain all psychological phenomena upon a physical basis. He at least derived from his association with scientific minds that spirit of conscientious research which he exhibited through his lifetime, his longing for facts, his love for first-hand knowledge, controlled in the most scientific manner. Philosophy, the philosophy which of late has unremittingly assailed materialism, was not yet dreamed of, and that which existed at a time when it might have influenced this man had been silenced by Napoleon III. after the *coup d'état*.

Flaubert, like so many French boys of his day, had a strong literary education. Even at an early hour his love of literature had taken hold of his very emotional nature. Fostered by a glowing romanticism, it colored and distorted his views of existence, intensifying his predisposition for extraordinary and exotic life. Hence his extensive travels in the Orient, in Corsica, and Tunis. The romantic literature fired his enthusiasm for the unusual, while his stay in Paris as a law student put him in touch with art in



GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

*From an Etching by H. Toussaint after the Drawing by C. Commanville*





its highest forms. His devotion to literature and art came to assume the intensity of a religion, yet in all periods the scientific spirit kept a strong hold upon him. Love of truth and of the beautiful was his all-absorbing passion. His travels deepened, but did not change the man. An early development of epilepsy was probably the supreme determining factor of his life and thought and work. The great forces which might have wrought his ethical salvation were shut out. Henceforth he lived a relatively secluded life among a few friends and his books. The rest of the world had no interest for him except as the butt of a Neronian contempt. The sufferings of his time and the great problem of his age left him absolutely indifferent. He had a profound horror of the most legitimate utilitarian aims, viewed the world as a pessimist, and often in moments of indignant furor hurled like a maniac the daggers of his rage at the French bourgeoisie. He could not have said with Wordsworth, "a deep distress hath humanized my soul." Possessed of a sufficient income, he labored with remarkable patience, engrossed by his literary work, the outcome of which was "*Madame Bovary*" in 1857, "*Salamambo*" in 1862, "*Sentimental Education*" in 1869, "*St. Anthony's Temptation*" in 1874, three short stories—"Hérodias," "*St. Julian the Hospitable*," and "*A Simple Heart*" in 1877, "*Bouvard and Pécuchet*" in 1881, though his death had occurred in 1880.

"*Madame Bovary*" is a study of provincial life. It is the most perfect realistic novel in French literature—the masterpiece of a poet, a stylist, and a rare observer, all in one. Monseigneur Dupanloup said of it: "It is true like truth." Some one asked how he knew that. "Well," he answered, "when I was a priest in the country I heard the confession of many women." Flaubert's lynx-eyed powers of observation were concentrated upon *Madame Bovary*,

whose life of moral weakness and wickedness he sketched with flawless accuracy and consummate literary perfection.

"*Salammbô*" takes us into another world. Instead of a portraiture of Norman life we are ushered into Carthaginian antiquity. Carthage is represented with most minute details—fruits of a tireless erudition—as it was at the time of the War of Mercenaries, which followed the first Punic war. Salammbô, a young Carthaginian priestess, plays the usual part of Flaubert's women amid the scenes of accumulated horrors and cruelties with which that war is associated. It is rather an archæological study than a novel, the fictitious element being slight. The heroine is an exquisite charcoal design upon a most able and most conscientious historical reconstruction.

The "*Sentimental Education*," an inadequately named novel, is an attempt to sketch the Parisian life of the last half of Louis Philippe's reign, when Flaubert was a student in the French capital. Notwithstanding its great qualities of observation, and, above all, of style and description, the personages are lifeless. The book is poorly composed, and yet one feels the touch of a strong hand. It is interesting as a master's failure.

"*St. Anthony's Temptation*" is a novel of historical psychology. There are those who have considered it an allegorical prose poem to be classified next after Goethe's "*Faust*." It is a very great and very odd book, in which the author has accumulated descriptions of inner religious life and former beliefs which would do well in a volume of historical theology, but not in a novel. If the work contains "all the spiritual and mystical testament" of Flaubert, as has been said, there can be no greater evidence of his philosophical and religious limitations. The real conclusion of this book is—if there is a conclusion at all—the

illusory character of all religions, and the unspeakable folly of humanity which clings to them even when it has recognized their untenableness. In fact, Flaubert was too absolutely pagan to succeed in this realm. No class of men was more incapable of rising to an independent scientific study of religious phenomena than the set to which he belonged. His friends were Maxime du Camp, Théophile Gautier and Tourguéneff. He was also the uncle of Guy de Maupassant.

No one but a great writer could ever have written "*Madame Bovary*," and that is the book whereby he will be best remembered. His other works have the misfortune of following his great masterpiece, and in comparison with it they stand in striking inferiority. They have already lost their interest for French readers, but this first novel stands and will long stand as a literary landmark in French letters. It exercised considerable influence upon the subsequent literary activity of France. It became the breviary of the naturalists and a model for their works.

Thoroughly penetrated with romanticism, from which he kept the unfettered spirit and the hardihood of metaphors by the force of his scientific spirit and his literary ideals, he strongly affected the writers of his day. More than any one else, except Taine, he contributed to the evolution of the French novel from the realism of Balzac to the naturalism of Zola. On the other hand, he also influenced the Parnassians, who inherited his worship of rich euphonic combinations. He struggled for technical words, exact words, sonorous, superb, beautiful, and happy words; he would rise during the night to change an adjective in a line and work a week for a perfect sentence. He generalized from a large body of facts patiently accumulated, chose a few typical and striking characteristics of men, gave the greatest attention to the least detail, in a word was

the Meissonier of romance—a Meissonier excelling in his literary structure, excelling in his descriptions. He wished to give absolute objectiveness to his pages, to eliminate—as if that were possible—the writer from his work. He would have mercilessly banished selfhood from art. His power was felt by the cultivated spirits of France and not by the masses. He was a conscientious artist; an artist perfect in form, not in subject matter; a brilliant artist, not an elevated and elevating one; an artist indifferent to all relations save those of æsthetics, to all duties except those dictated by his artistic conscience. Unfortunately his art had no inspiration and no tonic for life. His literature was not one of action, but one of fantasy. However, he strove for reality, assimilated erudition in his compositions, fought the good fight of conscientious workmanship, but there was lacking in him and in his works the ethical element without which no writer can secure his abiding place among the great spirits of the world of letters—or of any other world.

JEAN CHARLEMAGNE BRACQ.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

The greatest of the second empire novelists is unquestionably Gustave Flaubert, who was born in 1821. Having a sufficient income, he betook himself early to literature, which he cultivated with an amount of care and self-discipline rare among authors. In 1848 he contributed to the *Artiste* newspaper, then edited by Gautier, some fragments of a remarkable fantasy-piece on the legend

of St. Anthony, which was not published as a whole till nearly a quarter of a century later. In 1859, being then almost forty years old, he achieved at once a great success and a great scandal by his novel of "*Madame Bovary*"—a study of provincial life, as unsparing as any of Balzac's, but more true to actual nature, more finished in construction, and far superior in style. It was the subject of a prosecution, but the author was acquitted. The faults of Flaubert are, in the first place, indiscriminate meddling with subjects best left alone, which he shares with most French novelists; in the second, a certain complaisance in dealing with things simply horrible, which is more peculiar to him; in the third, an occasional prodigality of erudite detail, which clogs and impedes the action. His merits are an almost incomparable power of description, a mastery of those types of character which he attempts, an imagination of extraordinary power, and a singular satirical criticism of life, which does not exclude the possession of a vein of romantic and almost poetical sentiment and suggestion. He is a writer repulsive to many, unintelligible to more, and never likely to be generally popular, but sure to retain his place in the admiration of those who judge literature as literature.—SAINTSBURY.

## II.

Everything about Flaubert was in contradiction of the narrowness and pettiness of contemporary life. His tall figure, broad shoulders, vivid coloring, and long, pendant mustaches, gave him the air of an ancient "sea god." With his ample gestures, his trumpet-like voice, and his theatrical bearing, he produced a startling and quite formidable effect, which was further magnified by his costume. Not only in his attitudes, his manner of walking, speaking, and laughing, but even in the form of his hats, did he protest against the routine and insipidity of "bourgeois" manners. These exteriors do not deceive. His soul was filled with scorn for vulgarity, and a craving for pomp and splendor, indicated by his face, bearing,

dress—in fine, by his whole person. In appearance he was a romantic paladin. He more than once recalls the sublime dreams and glorious fantasies of his youth. In his sentimental exaltation we recognize the influence of romanticism which persisted even to the end in this master of contemporary “naturalism.” He is believed to be insensible; his nerves are always in vibration. Indeed, he compares himself to one flayed. He might be thought to be completely disinterested in his creations; his characters affect him, pursue him, and mingle with his life; in fact, he relates the poisoning of Emma Bovary with the taste of arsenic in his mouth. He is supposed to have been a surly, morose pessimist; never was a man more naturally generous, enthusiastic, and fervent in sympathy and admiration.—PELLISSIER.

### III.

Pessimism, however original and however sincere, yet remains a disease; and had Flaubert brought only this message of despair he would not occupy his high place in our respect. Happily he brings another doctrine, that of heroism, and I had almost said of religion. Flaubert himself employs this word when speaking in one of his letters of Alfred de Musset: “He lacked religion,” he says, “and religion is indispensable.” What he meant was that in this life, so wretched in his eyes, and so foredoomed to failure, a man perceives nobility, finds comfort, only upon condition of devoting all his powers to something apart from himself and his interests, from his passions and his person. Perhaps this creed of the most exalted renunciation, following on the completest pessimism, is less contradictory than it appears; for the Christian faith, itself the most luminously hopeful which has ever appeared upon earth, rests also upon a pessimistic vision of man and of fate.—PAUL BOURGET.



## IV.

Jules de Goncourt died in 1870. "He was slain by style," his brother writes, "seeking to make the French language express all it can and even more." Literary form devoured him. "I remember," writes Edmond, "after hours of ceaseless night labor passed in revising, and in efforts after perfection which wore away his brain—I remember the anger of impotence, and, in fine, the strange, intense protestation with which he let himself fall on the divan, and how silent and overwhelming was the smoking that followed." Here was the same agony as that suffered by Flaubert, but differently confronted; and, while the giant of Croisset roused and trained himself for the struggle by scanning sentences in Chateaubriand's "*Atala*," Jules de Goncourt ransacked his mind, torturing its hyper-sensitive organism; and, vanquished, died at last in the full tide of youth, at thirty-nine years of age, from congestion of the brain, caused still more by the uncompromising severity of the "artist" than by overwork. It was the artist in him which made him pitiless of himself, and which never ceased spurring him on toward a greater perfection.—DE BURY.



## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM FLAUBERT.

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### THE DEATH OF MATHO.

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*From "Salammbô."*

The selection here presented is the concluding chapter of Flaubert's masterpiece, "*Salammbô*." Although the selection is complete in itself, a few explanations will enhance its interest for the reader. The scene is Carthage; the time just after the first Punic war. The Mercenaries employed by the great Hamilcar Barca (the father of Hannibal) in that war had been sent home by him to Carthage to be paid off. The Carthaginians, "grown covetous after the many privations their foreign campaigns had cost them, declined to pay the Mercenaries, but let them rest in idleness and feasting until they were thoroughly angered and mutinous, and then they sent them to another town to await the money. Here, Greeks and Libyrians, Libyans and Ligurians, Balearic slingers and runaway slaves, finally revolted, and, headed by Spendius, a crafty Greek, Mâtho, a Libyan, and Autharitus, a Gaul, marched back to Carthage to begin a stupendous siege, which Hamilcar finally crushed by gigantic efforts and punished with a cruelty almost without a parallel." To this extent the story is from history. The romance of the story consists in the passionate love of Mâtho, the Libyan chief and one of the leaders of the Mercenaries, and of Narr' Hava, King of the Numidians, who deserts the Mercenaries and becomes friendly to Carthage, for Salammbô, the daughter of Hamilcar. Salammbô is a worshipper—an adorer—of Tanit, the Carthaginian goddess representing the female principle of fecundity, and has passed her life in contemplating and studying the mysteries of that divinity. Mâtho, during the siege, gets into Carthage, enters the temple of Tanit, and carries off the Sacred Veil of Tanit, which no Carthaginian dare touch. During the raid, when clothed with the veil, he enters the private apartments of Salammbô and declares his passion for her. "He then retires, serene and composed before the mob which comes to kill him, but dares not touch him because of the sacred veil

or mantle. He carries this talisman into the camp of the Barbarians and thither Salammbô, commanded by the priests, comes to rescue it, at whatever risk of life or of virtue. Mâtho delivers it up, but the consecration of the loves of the Barbarian and the daughter of Hamilcar is the result of this interview." Presently Hamilcar succeeds in defeating the besiegers. Mâtho and the other leaders of the Mercenaries are taken prisoners. Salammbô is promised in marriage to Narr' Hava, and the Carthaginians, to reward her for her self-sacrifice in obtaining the Sacred Veil, unite to honor her marriage with a great feast. And, as a further honor, they determine that Mâtho shall be cruelly put to death in her presence.

Joy—a profound, immoderate, universal, frantic joy—reigned in Carthage. The statues of the Gods had been repainted, the breaches in the ruins repaired, and the streets strewn with branches of myrtle; at the corners of the converging streets incense burned; and the multitude, pressing on the terraces in their motley apparel, resembled masses of flowers blooming in the open air.

The continual yelping of voices was dominated by the cry of the water-carriers as they sprinkled the streets. Hamilcar's slaves, in his name, distributed roasted barley and pieces of raw meat. People accosted each other, and embraced in tears; the Tyrian cities were taken, the Nomads were dispersed, and all the Barbarians were annihilated. The Acropolis was hidden beneath colored canopies; the beak-heads of the triremes, drawn up outside of the mole, glittered like a bank of diamonds; everywhere one felt order re-established, a new existence commenced. A vast happiness spread over all, for it was the wedding day of Salammbô and the King of the Numidians.

On the terrace of the Temple of Khamoûn, gigantic gold plate loaded three long tables, where the Priests, the Elders, and the Rich were to sit; and a fourth still higher table was arranged for Hamilcar, Narr' Hava, and Salammbô: for by the restoration of the Sacred Veil she had saved her country, therefore the people made her wedding celebration a national rejoicing, and on the square below they awaited her appearance.

But another desire, much keener, excited their impatience, for the death of Mâtho was promised for this ceremony.

It had been at first proposed to flay him alive, to run molten lead into his bowels, or to starve him to death; others wished

to attach him to a tree with a monkey pinioned behind him, to beat his brains out with a stone—for he had offended Tanit, and it was but just that the cynocephales\* of Tanit should avenge her. Some even advised placing him on the back of a dromedary, and, after having inserted in various parts of his body flaxen wicks steeped in oil, that he should be paraded about; and they were amused at the idea of the large animal wandering through the streets with this man writhing under the fire, like a lighted candelabrum agitated by the wind.

But to which of the citizens should his torture be committed, and why frustrate the others? They would wish to find a mode of death wherein the entire city could participate, that in every way all hands, all weapons, all Carthaginian things, even to the pavement stones of the streets, and the water of the gulf, should unite to rend him, crush him, annihilate him. Therefore the Elders decided that he should go from his prison to the square of Khamoûn without an escort, his arms fastened behind his back; but the people were forbidden to strike him to the heart, as it was desired to prolong his life; or to pierce his eyes, for they would have him see his torture until the end; or to throw anything against his person, or to strike him with more than three fingers at a single blow.

Although he would not appear until the close of the day, frequently the crowd fancied they caught sight of him, and rushed toward the Acropolis, deserting the streets: then they returned with a prolonged murmur. Since the previous evening, many people had remained standing in the same places, and from a distance called out to each other, significantly displaying their finger-nails, which they had let grow long to more surely lacerate the victim's flesh. Others walked about excitedly. Some were pale, as if they awaited their own execution.

Suddenly, behind the Mappals, great feather fans rose above the heads. It was Salammbô leaving her palace: a sigh of relief was exhaled.

But the cortège occupied a long time coming, it moving step by step.

At first, defiled the priests of the *Dii-Pataci*, then those of Eschmoûn, and those of Melkarth, successively followed by all the other colleges, with the same insignia and in the same order

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\* The sacred monkeys of Tanit.

as they had observed at the time of the procession to the sacrifice. The pontiffs of Moloch passed by with heads lowered, and the multitude, as in a species of remorse, shrank back from them. But the priests of the Rabbetna advanced with a proud step, holding their lyres in their hands: the priestesses, wearing robes of yellow or black transparent stuffs, followed, uttering cries like birds, writhing like vipers, or to the sound of flutes they turned about, imitating the dance of the stars, and their light, fluttering vestments wafted delicate puffs of perfume softly through the streets. The people wildly applauded. Amid these women were hailed with cheers the Kedeschim, with their painted eyelids, symbolic of the hermaphrodisism of the Divinity; perfumed and clothed like the women, they resembled them, in spite of their flat breasts and their narrower hips.

The female principle dominated, overpowering all else. A mystic lasciviousness floated in the heavy air; already the flambeaux were lighted in the depths of the sacred woods, for during the night a grand debauchery would be held there; three vessels had brought courtesans from Sicily, and others had come from the desert.

As the various colleges arrived they took up their places in the courts of the temple, on the exterior galleries, or on the length of the double stairway that ascended against the walls, approaching each other at the top. The rows of white robes appeared between the colonnades, and the entire architecture was peopled with human statues, motionless as stone.

After the priests came the master of finance, the governors of provinces, and all the Rich. Below, surged a vast tumult. From the neighboring streets the throng poured forth; the sacred slaves beat them back with their staves; and in the midst of the Elders, crowned with gold tiaras, Salammbo was perceived upon a litter, over which a purple canopy was borne.

A tremendous cry arose; the cymbals and castanets sounded louder and louder, and the tambourines thundered as the grand purple canopy passed out of sight between the two gate-towers.

It reappeared on the first story. Salammbo paced slowly beneath it; then she crossed the terrace to take her seat at the back part, on a throne carved out of a tortoise-shell. An ivory stool of three steps was placed under her feet; on the edge of the first step two negro children kneeled, and occasionally she

rested her arms, weighted with heavy bracelets, upon their heads.

From her ankles to her hips she was enveloped in a network of tiny links, imitating the scales of a fish, and lustrous as polished mother-of-pearl. A blue zone compressed her waist, allowing her breasts to be seen through two crescent-shaped slashes, where carbuncle pendants hid their points. Her coiffure was made of peacocks' plumage, starred with jewels; a wide, ample mantle, white as snow, fell behind her—her elbows close against her body, her knees pressed together; circlets of diamonds clasped high on her arms; she sat perfectly upright in a hieratic attitude.

Her father and bridegroom sat on two lower seats. Narr' Havas was robed in a golden-colored simarre, and wore his rock-salt crown, from beneath which escaped two locks of hair, twisted like the horns of Ammon; Hamilcar was attired in a tunic of violet, brocaded with golden pampre, and wore his battle-sword girt to his side. In the space inclosed by the tables, the python of the temple of Eschmoûn lay on the ground between puddles of rose-oil, biting its tail, and thus describing a large black circle in the center of which was a copper column supporting a crystal egg, and as the sun shone upon it, prismatic rays darted out on all sides.

Immediately behind Salammbô spread the procession of the priests of Tanit, clothed in flaxen robes. At her right the Elders, bedecked with their tiaras, formed a great golden line. On the left, the Rich, with their emerald scepters, made a great, green line; and in the extreme background the priests of Moloch were ranged, and seemed, because of their mantles, like a purple wall. The other colleges occupied the inferior terraces. The multitude encumbered the streets, or were mounted on the housetops, and reached in long rows to the summit of the Acropolis.

Having thus the people at her feet, the firmament over her head, and around her the immensity of the sea, the gulf, and the mountains, and the perspectives of the provinces, Salammbô, resplendent, was confused with Tanit, and seemed herself the prevailing genius of Carthage—her soul incarnate.

The festival was to last all night, and candelabra with many branches were planted like trees upon the painted woolen tap-

estries that covered the low tables. Large flagons of electrum, amphoras of blue glass, tortoise-shell spoons, and small, round loaves, crowded between the double row of plates bordered with pearls; clusters of grapes, with their leaves like thyrsi entwined vine-stocks; blocks of snow were melting in ebony salvers; lemons, pomegranates, gourds, and watermelons were piled in hillocks beneath the tall, massive argentries; wild boars, with open jaws, wallowed in the dust of spices; hares, cooked whole, covered with their fur, seemed to leap between the flowers; shells were filled with forced meats; pasties were baked in symbolic forms; and when the dish-covers were first withdrawn live doves flew out.

Meanwhile, slaves with their tunics tucked up, moved about on tiptoe; from time to time the lyres sounded a hymn, or a chorus of voices burst forth. The hum of the people, continuous like the roar of the sea, floated vaguely over the feast, and seemed to rock it in a vast harmony. Many recalled the banquet of the Mercenaries;\* they abandoned themselves to dreams of happiness; the sun commenced to decline, and the crescent moon had already risen in the other part of the sky.

Salammbô turned her head, as if some one had called her; the concourse, who watched her every act, followed the direction of her gaze.

At the summit of the Acropolis, the door of the dungeon, cut in the rock at the foot of the temple, had just opened; a man stood on the threshold of this black hole.

He issued forth bent double, with the frightened air of a captive wild beast suddenly set at liberty. The light dazzled him; he remained some minutes motionless. All had recognized him, and held their breath.

The body of this victim was for the populace something specially their own, imbued with a splendor almost religious.

They leaned forward, straining to see him, particularly the women, who burned to contemplate the one who had caused the death of their children and husbands; but, despite of themselves, in the depths of their souls there arose an infamous curiosity—the desire to know him completely, a longing blended with remorse, which changed into an excess of execration.

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\* Depicted in the first chapter of "*Salammbô*"—one of the strongest scenes in the book.



Finally he advanced; the bewilderment of the surprise vanished. Numberless arms were raised, and for the moment he was no longer seen.

The stairway of the Acropolis had sixty steps; he descended them with a pitch forward, as if he was rolled in a torrent from the top of a mountain. Thrice he was seen to bound, then, at the bottom, he came down on his feet.

His shoulders bled, his chest heaved with deep pulsations, and he made such struggles to break the shackles that his arms, which were crossed on his naked loins, swelled like the coils of a serpent.

The place into which he now walked presented many streets fronting him. Along each street a triple barrier of bronze chains, attached to the navel of the *Dii-Pataci*, extended in parallel lines from end to end. The crowd was packed back against the walls and houses; in the midst of the throng, the slaves of the Elders moved about, brandishing whip-thongs.

One of these slaves pushed Mâtho before him with a powerful blow; he began to move forward.

The people stretched out their arms beyond the chains, remonstrating the while that he was allowed too wide a path. He passed along, struck, pricked, mangled by all these revengeful fingers: then, when he reached the end of one street, another appeared. Sometimes he threw himself to the side, striving to bite his tormentors; they would quickly draw back, and when the chains restrained him they would burst out in peals of laughter at his thwarted efforts.

A child tore his ear; a young girl concealed under her sleeve a spindle, with the point of which she slit his cheek; they pulled out handfuls of his hair, tore strips from his flesh, and others held sticks on which were fastened sponges saturated in filth with which they buffeted his face.

A stream of blood gushed from the right side of his throat; immediately a frenzy began. This last Barbarian represented to them all the Barbarians, all the army; they took revenge on him for all their disasters, terrors, and opprobrium. The rage of the people grew with its gratification; the chains strained too tight as they leaned against them, threatening to part asunder. They were insensible to the blows the servitors dealt to force them back; some clung to the projections of the houses;



all the apertures in the walls were choked up by heads, and the evil they were incapable of doing to his person they howled out upon him.

Their maledictions teemed with atrocities of obscene abuse, with ironical encouragements and imprecations; and as they were dissatisfied with his present agonies, they announced to him others more terrible yet for eternity.

This vast howling filled Carthage with a stupid monotony. Often a single syllable, one intonation, harsh, profound, frantic, would be repeated for many minutes by the entire people. The walls vibrated from the base to the top, and the two sides of the street seemed to Mâtho to come against him, and rise from the ground like two immense arms, which suffocated him in the air.

Meanwhile, he remembered that he had previously experienced something similar. It was the same crowd on the terraces, the same fierce looks, the same rage; but that other time he walked at liberty—all then scattered before him, for the power of a God shielded him.\* This memory, gradually becoming vividly distinct, brought to him a crushing sadness. Shadows passed before his eyes. The city whirled in a vertigo through his brain; blood jetted from a wound in his thigh; he felt himself to be dying; his legs doubled under him, and he sank softly upon the pavement.

Some of his persecutors took from a tripod in the peristyle of the temple of Melkarth a red-hot bar, slipped it through under the first chain and pressed it against his wound. The scorching flesh was seen to smoke; the yells of the people drowned his voice; but again he stood up and advanced.

Six paces further on, and a third, and yet a fourth, time he fell: always some new torture goaded him up and on. Boiling oil was squirted through tubes upon him; fragments of glass were strewn under his feet; yet he continued to walk. At the corner of the street Sateb he leaned beneath the pent-house of a shop, with his back against the wall, and moved no further.

The slaves of the Council struck him with whips of hippopotamus hide so furiously, and for so long a time that the fringes of their tunics were soaked with sweat. Mâtho ap-

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\* This refers to the time when Mâtho had taken the Sacred Veil from the temple.

peared insensible. Suddenly he took a fresh impetus, and started to run at hazard, emitting from his lips a shuddering noise, like one suffering from intense cold. Thus he passed through the streets of Boudès, the street of Sœpo, crossed the vegetable market, and came into the square of Khamoûn.

From this point, now, he belonged to the priests, and the Elders' slaves scattered the crowd; here he had more space. Mâtho looked around him, and his eyes encountered Salammbo.

At the first step that he had taken she had arisen; then, involuntarily, according as he drew nearer, she had advanced gradually to the edge of the terrace. Soon, for her, all other external things were effaced: she only saw Mâtho. A silence possessed her soul, one of those abysses wherein the whole world disappears under the impression of a single thought, of one memory—of one look. This man who walked toward her irresistibly fascinated her.

There remained nothing except his eyes which retained a human appearance: he was a long form, completely red; his broken shackles, hanging the length of his thighs, were so bloody that they could no longer be distinguished from the tendons of his wrists, denuded of flesh; his mouth remained open; from his orbits issued two flames, which had the appearance of mounting to his hair—and yet this wretched creature kept ever moving on.

He came just to the foot of the terrace. Salammbo was leaning on the balustrade; those frightful eyeballs were staring at her; and within her awoke the consciousness of all he had suffered for her sake. Although he was now agonized in death-throes, she re-saw him in his tent, on his knees as he encircled her waist with his arms, babbling sweet speeches; she yearned to feel those arms again, and hear those words once more. She did not wish that he should die. At this moment Mâtho was seized with a great tremor. She was about to cry out, when he fell backward to the earth, and moved no more.

Salammbo almost swooned; she was carried back to her throne by the priests who pressed around her. They felicitated her: it was her work. All clapped their hands and stamped their feet, and yelled her name in universal acclamation.

A man darted upon the body: although he was beardless, he wore on his shoulders the mantle of the priests of Moloch, and

in his girdle the sort of knife used to cut up the sacred viands, the haft terminating in a golden spatula.

By a single stroke he split open Mâtho's chest, then tore out his heart, placing it on the spatula; and Schahabarim—for it was he—raised his arm, offering it to the Sun.

The sun was sinking behind the waves; his rays, struck like long arrows athwart the crimson heart. He sank beneath the sea as the throbbing diminished, and at the last pulsation disappeared. Then from the gulf to the Lagoon, and from the isthmus as far as the lighthouse, in all the streets, over all the housetops, and over all the temples, there welled forth a single cry; sometimes it paused, only to reburst: the edifices trembled—Carthage was convulsed in the spasm of a Titanic joy, and a hope without bounds.

Narr' Havas, intoxicated with pride, passed his left arm about Salammbô's waist, in sign of possession; and in the right hand he took a gold patera, and drank to the genius of Carthage.

Salammbô arose, like her consort, grasping a cup in her hand, in order also to drink. She fell, with her head leaning over the back of the throne, pallid, stiff, her lips parted—and her disheveled hair hung to the ground.

Thus died the daughter of Hamilcar, for having touched the Veil of Tanit.

## XXIV. DAUDET.

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Alphonse Daudet was born in the city of Nîmes in 1840. His father having been unfortunate in business, the family removed to Lyons. Alphonse studied in the lycée of that city, cherishing the memories of the old home in the ancient city of Nîmes, and magnifying in his heart, through boyish ideal recollection, the beauty of Provençal life. At the death of his father he went to the college of Alais, a little town of the Cevennes, as one of those unfortunates called *pions*—half tutor, half usher. There he was so wretched that he thought most seriously of the possibility of suicide. This experience, even during later years, appeared to him as the great shadow of his early life. At the age of seventeen he was drawn to Paris, where his brother, Ernest Daudet, who has since become a well-known man of letters, had preceded him. The sum of \$15 which Ernest was earning monthly kept the two brothers until the dawn of better days. Alphonse was happy when he could pay himself the luxury of a candle to write poetry at night. He worked in a little mansard room, without comfort, without heat, without food, but with indomitable courage, and boundless hope. In 1858, at the age of eighteen, he published "*Les Amoureux*," a small volume of verses that were sufficiently noticed to give him a start in the literary world. Some of those who believed in his literary future secured for him the position of private secretary to De Morny, the half-brother of Napoleon III. and president of the legis-

lative assembly. Independently of the knowledge of men which this position enabled him to secure, it also meant financial ease. During this period he sought his way either in the light drama or in journalism.

The hardships of his life during the trying days and the strain of his Parisian existence so endangered his health that he was forced to travel in Algeria, Sardinia, Corsica, and Provence. His prosperity and his rapid popularity exercised a bad influence upon him. He was saved from the deterioration of bohemianism by his marriage, and helped to a higher literary ideal by Madame Daudet, who remained all through his career a great factor in his success. In 1868 he issued "*Le Petit Chose*"—"The Little Chap"—a sort of autobiographic novel. In 1869 he published his famous "*Lettres de Mon Moulin*"—"Letters from My Mill." The Franco-Prussian war affected him deeply and called forth those short stories which told the tragic sufferings of the fatherland. Some of these stories are as touching and as beautiful as the war paintings of De Neuville. "*The Last Cartridges*" of the latter is akin to "*The Siege of Berlin*" and "*The Last Class*" of Daudet. In 1872 "*Tartarin de Tarascon*" made its appearance. Meanwhile he was preparing himself for more important work. During the next fourteen years he wrote his best and most enduring novels—"Jack," "*Le Nabab*," "*Les Rois en Exil*" ("*The Kings in Exile*")—not to speak of other works in which he seems to have acted with apparent ethical indifference. It is at this time that he felt the influence of naturalism, which was then so potent as to sweep everything in its course. Zola and De Goncourt left their traces upon him, the signs of naturalistic methods became visible, but Daudet had too much spontaneity to be enslaved by the tenets of a literary school. In 1883 he published "*L'Évangéliste*" and in 1888 "*L'Im-*

*mortel*," the former a satire of French Protestantism, and the latter of the French Academy. In 1885 and in 1890 he gave to the world two more Tartarins—" *Tartarin sur les Alpes* " and " *Port-Tarascon* "—there ending the series of his Provençal satires. It would be impossible to enumerate all his works without making a very long and wearisome list. Like most French novelists, he often endeavored to reap laurels upon the stage, but without great success. However, by the quantity of fascinating reading matter which he gave the public he stands second to none of his contemporaries.

His Tartarins are among the most exquisite creations of modern satire. Wishing to expose to ridicule the boastful and bombastic spirit of southern France, he did it in his three Tartarins. Never had French literature seen finer wit and more bubbling humor at the service of truth than in these fascinating extravaganzas. His " *Lettres de Mon Moulin*," " *La Belle Nivernaise* " and his many other short, varied poetic compositions give him the undisputed position of a master. Most of them need only rhymes to be the choicest idyls of our own times. Remarkable by their variety of subjects, elaborated by a rich and playful imagination, they have an exquisite form—a form not the fruit of classical training, but of a highly gifted nature.

Among his novels, " *Le Petit Chose* " would have been a fascinating bit of literary art had it not been marred by the fictitious adventure of a contemptible, fictitious woman, in a book which was the story of his own life. Daudet always worked from models, this time himself. He has shown his greatest power in " *Jack*," the poor victim of a wretched would-be writer; " *Le Nabab*," a rich adventurer, in the midst of the corrupted society of the second empire, reduced to abject poverty; " *Les Rois en Exil*," a study of weak, dethroned monarchs in Paris. In " *L'Évangéliste* "





ALPHONSE DAUDET





he meant to set forth the harshness of religious propaganda, but in so doing he represented the Protestant world, which was not familiar to him, in colors which are false and misleading, "*Sapho*" is a cruel picture of the worst sphere of the life of Paris, so written that the author, to disarm criticism, dedicated it to his son for his instruction on the threshold of early manhood. "*L'Immortel*" is an obvious attempt to cast disfavor upon the French Academy, as if from its foundation to the present time it had not been represented by the overwhelming majority of the great writers of France. In these books, as well as in the others which we do not mention, there is not only a careful study of the central figure, but of the whole group to which it belongs.

All through Daudet's works one feels that the literary note is a personal one. He had lived his books, and their history is the history of his life; although, under the influence of naturalism, he endeavored to write with absolute objectiveness. Notwithstanding his agnosticism—or the appearance of it—and his determinism, he is strongly ethical. His thought generally gives the first place to the moral rather than to the physical determinations of his characters. He frequently asserts his faith in the immanent justice of things. "I believe absolutely," he said, "in the formula, everything must be paid for; I have ever seen man receive the wages of his works, good or bad, and that not in the other life, which I do not know, but in this one, in ours, sooner or later." Again and again he has eloquently asserted the imperativeness of duty in terms which have not been surpassed either by Emerson or Carlyle. His descriptions of immoral life—and they are not few—always carry with them disapproval and condemnation. As an observer he is as sharp as he is accurate. He had an eye for details, but he never lost himself

in them. He showed great originality in his portraiture of characters, which, by his artistic generalizations, become types, and yet remain living. No writer except Dickens, perhaps, has displayed more sympathy for his unfortunate heroes and heroines. His style is that of a consummate artist—a style which has baffled the best efforts of foreign translators. By the quantity and the variety of his works, by his keenness as an observer, by his large human sympathy, by his gifts as a prose-poet, by the new fields which he has opened, by genuine humor, by his contagious cheerfulness, and his power of expression, he was one of the men who in later times have honored French letters.

JEAN CHARLEMAGNE BRACQ.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

We all know how well Daudet succeeded in winning for himself a foremost place in the ranks of French literature. There is no doubt that he was admirably equipped for the great struggle on which he was about to enter; but it may be also remarked that he had not to fight it out alone and with his own solitary resources, but found at the very outset useful and strong auxiliaries. He was to have a powerful though somewhat selfish and indolent patron in the famous Duke of Morny, who admitted him among his secretaries before he was twenty years old. Then he had the good fortune to attract the attention and to take the fancy of the editor of the "*Figaro*," who at first sight gave him a place in his nursery of young talents. He had a kind and devoted brother who cheerfully shared with him the little money he had to live upon. Later on he was still more fortu-

nate in securing a loving and intelligent wife, who was not only to become a help and a comfort, but a literary adviser, a moral guide, and a second conscience far more strict and exacting than his own; a wife who taught him to direct and husband his precious faculties—how to turn them to the noblest use and highest ends.—AUGUSTIN FILON.

## II.

At home he and I used to joke at the eagerness with which each of us tried to get the newspapers away from each other early in the morning. He read the papers with remarkable quickness; nothing that was important escaped him. He could not resist the pleasure of writing at once a word of congratulation to the author of some article which pleased him. He remembered new names. In the papers, as in books, he warmed toward every appearance of talent. He wanted to see the writer, make him talk, aid him from his earliest beginnings. It sometimes happened that he reversed the rôles, and a reporter sent to receive his own confession was put by him in the confessional. Many who are famous to-day will recall his encouragements and the genial way in which he reassured timidity: "It is part of the rôle of the vender of happiness to give good counsel to smaller comrades. When I receive one of these young men who with difficulty gain their bread at so much a line, I recall my own beginning and reflect that perhaps I have before me a man of the future, a real talent."—*From "Memoirs."* By his sons.

## III.

It is a general notion that as is the book so is the man; that no author can wholly conceal his personality. Nature, they say, driven away through the door, will enter by the window. On this principle one would imagine that Zola had been bred and his character formed amid

the vilest dregs of the Parisian canaille. Yet, in fact, his life had been blameless and pure. Alphonse Daudet, on the other hand, was emphatically the novelist of elegant, aristocratic society, the favorite of the ladies of the drawing-room, the depicter of all that is of the highest culture in the social system. Judging him by his writings, one would imagine that he had spent his whole life leaning in full dress against the mantelpiece of the most recherché salon in the capital. His actual career, on the contrary, was one of remarkable ups and downs. The society with which he mingled, especially during his youth, was by no means refined. He lived in his earlier years like a thorough bohemian.—MAURICE MAURIS.

#### IV.

There was not a tinge of pedantry in Daudet; nothing that betrayed effort or suggested the dogged labor of the professional author. He let his subject take possession of him; he showed an affection for his characters and a delight in his theme. He wrote with a fever in his veins that was far from unpleasant; and a fiery haste that made his pen fly and sent a thrill to his finger-tips. In the exuberance of his nature, and overflowing with the desire to spread his ideas abroad and give them immediate shape, he acted and talked his scenes before writing them. The book was lived, and lived among the surroundings that suited it best, so that it seemed to emerge from them spontaneously.—RENÉ DOUMIC.

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM DAUDET.

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THE STORY OF "TARTARIN OF TARASCON."\*

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*From "Thirty Years of Paris and of My Literary Life."*

Although it is now nearly fifteen years since I published the "*Adventures of Tartarin*," Tarascon has not yet forgiven me for writing them; and travelers worthy of belief assure me that every morning, when the tiny Provençal town opens the shutters of its shops and shakes its carpets in the balmy breath of the great Rhone, there breaks forth from every threshold and from every window a united fury of clenched fists and flaming black eyes, one vast cry of rage directed toward Paris. "Oh, that Daudet! If for once he came this way!" As Bluebeard says in the story, "Come down, or I come up."

And, without joking, one day, Tarascon did "come up!"

It was in 1878, when Provincials swarmed in the hotels, on the boulevards, and on that gigantic bridge connecting the Champ de Mars and the Trocadéro. One morning, the sculptor Amy, a native of Tarascon, naturalized in Paris, beheld, piercing their way into his house, a formidable pair of moustaches, arrived by the excursion train, under pretext of seeing the Exhibition, but in reality to have an explanation with Daudet on the subject of the brave Commandant Bravida, and the "*Défense de Tarascon*," a little tale published by me during the war.

"*Qué?* We will go to that Daudet!"

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\*In this "Story" Daudet gives an account of his writing of "*Tartarin of Tarascon*," and of the trouble he got into with the Tarasconians because of writing it.

It was always the first word of those Tarascon moustaches on entering the studio; and for a whole fortnight the sculptor Amy had this phrase ringing in his ears: "And now, then, where shall we find that Daudet?" The unfortunate artist was at his wits' end to find any way of sparing me this serio-comic visit. He took the moustaches of his compatriot to the Exhibition, lost them in the gallery of "dwellings of all nations," in the machinery department; poured down their throat English beer, Hungarian wines, mares' milk, and every exotic and varied drink he could find; and deafened them with music of all kinds: Moorish, Tzigane, Japanese; worried them, tired them to death, and dragged them—like Tartarin on his minaret—to the summit of the Trocadéro turrets.

But the enmity of the Provençal rankled deep, and even from this lofty height, spying over Paris, he said with a frown:

"Can we see his house?"

"Whose house?"

"*Té!* Why, Daudet's, of course!"

It was the same thing everywhere. Happily, the excursion train got up steam again, and carried away the unsatisfied vengeance of the Tarascon; but although that one had departed, others might arrive, and all the time the Exhibition was open I never slept.

It is a serious affair, after all, to feel concentrated upon oneself the hatred of a whole town. Even now, whenever I go south, I feel an awkwardness in passing Tarascon; I know they still bear me a grudge; that my books are prohibited in their libraries—are not even to be found at the railway bookstalls; and from the first moment I behold, through the railway-carriage window, the castle of good King René, I feel myself ill at ease and long to whisk past that station.

This is why I seize the opportunity afforded me by this new edition to offer publicly, with my apologies to the people of Tarascon, the explanation which the former commander-in-chief of their militia came at that time to demand of me.

Tarascon was for me only a pseudonym picked up on the way from Paris to Marseilles, because it had a fine, sonorous roll in the accent of the South, and sounded, as the name of the station was shouted, like the triumphant war-cry of an Apache warrior. In reality, the home of Tartarin, and the scene of the famous



cap-shooting parties, is a little farther off, five or six leagues on the other side of the Rhone. There it was that as a child I watched the baobab tree, languishing in the confinement of its tiny mignonette pot, faithful image of my hero, cramped within the precincts of his little town; there the Rebuffas sang the duet from *Robert le Diable*: from thence it was, in short, that in November, 1861, Tartarin and I, armed to the teeth and *chechia* on head, started to hunt the lion in Africa. To tell the truth, I did not go there altogether expressly for that purpose, being desirous, above all things, of repairing my somewhat dilapidated lungs in the warm sunshine. But not in vain, Heaven be praised, was I born in the land of the mighty cap-shooters! And from the moment I set foot on the deck of the "Zouave," where they were getting on board our enormous case of arms, I imagined, more Tartarin than Tartarin himself, that I was going to exterminate all the wild beasts of the Atlas.

Ah, what a fairy tale was that first voyage! How vividly I can recall the moment of departure; the blue sea before me—blue as cobalt—all ruffled by the wind, flecked with sparkling spray, and the bowsprit of the vessel, which again and again rose in the air, dipped in the wave, trembled a moment all white with foam, and ever pointed seaward; once more I hear, in the broad sunlight, the hour of noon strike from all the clocks of Marseilles, and once more my twenty years of life ring in my head a joyous peal.

Merely to speak of it brings it all before me again; I am over there; I haunt the bazaars of Algiers in a semi-daylight which is scented with musk, amber, dried rose leaves, and warm woolen stuffs. Three stringed guzlas are twanging before the little glass-fronted Tunisian cupboards, arabesqued in mother-of-pearl, while the splash of the fountain throws a fresh note of sound upon the tiles of the courtyard. I see myself ranging the Sahel, the orange groves of Blidah, the Chiffa, the famous brook of monkeys; wandering over the green slopes of Mili-anah, its orchards tangled with bottle-gourds, sunflowers, and fig trees, as in the walled enclosures of our own Provence.

Once more the immense valley of Chélif lies before me, with its thick brushwood of lentisk and dwarf palms, and the dry beds of torrents edged with oleanders; on the horizon the smoke of a campfire rises straight upward from a thicket of cactus;

nearer, the gray circle trampled by a caravan; a saint's tomb, with its white turban-like cupola, its thank-offerings hung on the dazzling, whitewashed wall; and here and there, in the wide, burnt-up space, a few dark, moving spots which I know to be cattle.

I hear again, accompanied by the horrible shaking of my Arab saddle, the clink of my great stirrups, the cry of the shepherds rebounding through the still and clear atmosphere: "*Si mohame—e—ed—i*"; the furious barking of the *slougi* dogs round the camps; the firing and howling of an Arab *fantasia*, and the wild music of *derboukas*, played in the evening before the tent doors, while jackals yelp in the plains, persevering like our grasshoppers; and above all rises in the star-spangled blackness of the night sky a faint crescent of the moon—the crescent of Mohammed. Very distinct, too, in my memory is the dreariness of the return; the feeling of exile and cold on arriving at Marseilles, where the blue of our Provençal sky seemed to me chilled and veiled by comparison with those clear and vast Algerian skies, filled as they were with the most intense and varied range of color: with the wonderful green of the sunrise—a poisonous, arsenical green; with the brief twilights of the evening changing and trembling through mother-of-pearl tints of purple and amethyst; where the wells were rose-colored, and rose-colored camels came to drink, and the chain of the well and the beard of the Bedouin who drank from the same bucket all glittered with rose-tinted drops; after a lapse of twenty years, I feel again the regret and longing for the breadth of that African sunshine left behind me.

There is in the language of the poet Mistral, a word which comprises and defines clearly a whole instinct of the race: *galléja*, to joke, to make fun. And it conveys to the mind the flash of irony, the sparkle of malice, shining in the depths of the Provençal eyes. *Galléja* recurs on all occasions in the conversation, in the form of a verb or substantive. "*Vessés-pás? Es uno galéjado. Don't you see? It is only a joke. Taisoté, galéjaïré. Hold your tongue, naughty jester.*" But to be *galéjaïré* does not exclude from the character either kindness or tenderness. They amuse themselves, *té!* they must laugh; but in that country laughter is the accompaniment of every sentiment, of the deepest as of the most tender. In an old, old song of my

beloved mother-country, the history of little Fleurance, this Provençal love of laughter is exquisitely exemplified. Fleurance, when almost a child, is betrothed to a knight, who marries her, *la prén tan jouveneto se saup pas courdela*, when so young that she can scarcely tie for herself the lacing of her bodice. Scarcely is the honeymoon over when Fleurance's lord is obliged to start for Palestine, leaving his little bride all alone. Seven years pass by, and the knight has given no sign of life, when one day a pilgrim with cockle-shell and long beard presents himself at the gate of the castle. He has returned from the wars; he brings news of the husband of Fleurance; and at once the fair lady causes him to be admitted and places him at table opposite to her.

What happened between them then I can relate to you in two ways; for the story of Fleurance, like all popular songs, has made the round of France in the peddlers' packs, and I found it in Picardy with a significant variation. In the Picardy version the lady begins to weep in the middle of the feast.

"You weep, fair Fleurance?" says the pilgrim, all trembling.

"I weep because I recognize you—you are my dear husband."

The little Fleurance of Provence, on the contrary, is scarcely seated in front of the pilgrim with the great beard before she begins to laugh delightfully at him.

"*Hé*, what are you laughing at, Fleurance?"

"*Té*, I laugh because you are my husband."

And, laughing, she jumps upon his knee, and the pilgrim also laughs in his sham beard of tow; for he is, as she is, a *galéjaîré*; all of which does not prevent them from loving each other tenderly, with open arms, with meeting lips, with all the pent emotion of their faithful hearts.

I, too, am a *galéjaîré*. In the fogs of Paris, in the splashing of her mud, in the sadness lurking in a great city, I may perhaps have lost the taste and faculty of laughter; but in reading *Tartarin* any one may see that there then remained in me a store of gayety which promptly broke forth in the glorious sunlight of "*down there*."

Certainly, I am willing to admit that many other things might have been written about Algerian France than the *Adventures of Tartarin*; for instance, a close and incisive study of man-

ners and customs, the observations of a new country on the confines of two races and two civilizations, with their reflex action; the conqueror conquered in his turn by the climate, by the profoundly indolent habits, the carelessness, the utter rottenness of the East, the bastinado and thieving, the Algerian Doineau, and the Algerian Bazaine—those two perfect products of the Arab *bureau*. What revelations might be made of the wretchedness of this pioneer existence, this history of a colonist; the foundation of a town in the midst of the rivalry of three presiding powers—army, civil administration, and magistracy. Instead of all that, I brought back nothing but *Tartarin*, a burst of laughter, a *galéjade*.

It is true that my comrade and I must have appeared a fine pair of simpletons, when we landed in red sashes and gaudy *chechia* in the famous town of Algiers, where we were the only two “Teurs.” With what a meditative air of conviction did Tartarin doff his immense hunting boots at the doors of the mosques and gravely penetrate into the sanctuaries of Mohammed, with tight-shut lips and in bright-colored socks! Ah! how thoroughly he at least believed in the East, in the muezzins and the almées, in the lions, the panthers, and the dromedaries; in everything that his books had been kind enough to suggest to him, and which his meridional imagination had magnified and exaggerated.

Faithful as the camel of my story, I followed him through his heroic dream; but I had my moments of doubt. I remember one evening at Oued-Fodda, starting off to lie in wait for a lion; how, passing through a camp of *chasseurs d’Afrique*, with all our paraphernalia of spatterdashes, guns, revolvers, and hunting-knives, I felt a sharp sensation of ridicule, when I saw the silent amazement of these worthy troopers cooking their soup in front of the long lines of tents. “And what if, after all, there is no lion!”

Nevertheless, an hour later, when night had fallen, hiding on my knees in a clump of laurels, sweeping the dark shadows with my glasses, while the cry of the crane sounded high up in the sky, and the jackals trampled the vegetation around me, I felt my gun chatter and rattle on the handle of the hunting-knife stuck in the ground.

I have invested Tartarin with this shiver of fear, and the ab-

surd reflections which accompany it; but it is doing him a great injustice. I can honestly assure you that if the lion had really come, the worthy Tartarin would have received him rifle in hand, dagger upraised; and if his ball had missed, his sword broken in the huge animal closing upon him, he would have finished the struggle hand to hand, would have crushed the fierce brute in the powerful muscles of his arms, and torn it to pieces with his nails and his teeth, not even stopping to spit out the fur; for he was a tough fellow at bottom, this mighty shooter of caps, and, moreover, a man of humor, who was the first to laugh at any *galéjade*!

The story of Tartarin was not written till long after my journey in Algeria. The journey took place in 1861-62; the book was written in 1869. I began to publish it in parts in the *Petit Moniteur Universel*, illustrated with amusing sketches by Emile Benassit. It was an absolute failure. The *Petit Moniteur* was a popular paper, and the populace are puzzled by printed irony which makes them think they are being laughed at. No words can describe the disappointment of the subscribers to this half-penny paper, who delighted in *Rocambole* and the writings of Ponson du Terrail, when they read in the first chapters of the life of Tartarin of the songs, of the baobab tree; their disappointment even expressed itself in personal abuse and threats of discontinued subscriptions. I used to receive letters which said: "Well, then, what follows? What does all this prove? Idiot!" and then came a furious signature. Paul Dalloz suffered the most, for he had gone to great expense in advertisements, and illustrations, and paid dear for this experience. After a dozen or so of numbers had appeared, I took pity on him and carried *Tartarin* to the *Figaro*, whose readers were better fitted to understand it; but here it was met by other conflicting powers. The working editor of the *Figaro* just then was Alexandre Duvernois, brother of Clément Duvernois, quondam journalist and minister. By the merest chance I had, nine years before, in the course of my delightful expedition, met Alexandre Duvernois—at that time an humble clerk in the civil administration of Milianah, and who from that date retained a perfect enthusiasm for the whole Colony. Irritated and indignant at the frivolous spirit in which I wrote about his beloved Algeria, he arranged, although he could not prevent the pub-

lication of *Tartarin*, to cut it up into intermittent scraps, on the horrible stereotyped pretext of "press of matter," to such effect that the poor little tale dragged its weary length in the paper, almost as interminably as the *Wandering Jew* or the *Three Musketeers*. "It drags, it drags," grumbled the deep bass of Villemessant, and I was greatly afraid I should be obliged to break off once more.

Then came fresh tribulations. The hero of my book was then called Barbarin of Tarascon.

Now, there unfortunately happened to live at Tarascon an old family of the name of Barbarin, who threatened to go to law with me if I did not at once take their name out of this outrageous piece of tomfoolery. Having a holy horror of courts of law, and justice generally, I agreed to replace Barbarin by Tartarin on the already corrected proofs, which had, therefore, to be re-read line by line in a most scrupulous hunt for the letter B. In those three hundred pages, a few managed to escape my notice, and you may find in the first edition Bartarin, Tarbarin, and even *tonsoir* for *bonsoir*. At last the book was published, and succeeded well enough in the circulating library, notwithstanding the local flavor, which could not be to the taste of everyone. One must be of the South, or know it very well indeed, to understand how frequent a type amongst us this Tartarin is, and how, under the glorious sunshine of Tarascon, which fills its people with warmth and electricity, the wild absurdity of brains and imagination becomes developed in profoundly exaggerated forms, as varied in shape and dimensions as the fruit of the bottle-gourd.

Judged impartially, at a distance of years, *Tartarin*, with its careless and madcap style, seems to me to possess the qualities of youth, life, and truth; a truth, however, of beyond the Loire, which exaggerates, dilates, but does not lie, and is Tarascon to the backbone all the time. The quality of the writing is neither very finished nor very concise. It is what I venture to call "peripatetic literature," spoken, gesticulated; accompanied by all the easy manners of my hero. But I must own that, with all my love of style, of fine prose, harmonious and full of life and color, this is not all that is needed, in my opinion, by the novelist. His truest joy must always be to create beings, to set on foot by their truth to nature types of humanity which shall



thenceforward be known in the world by the name, the expression, and gesture he has bestowed upon them, and which have caused them to be talked of, detested, or liked, by those who read of them, without reference to their creator, or without so much as mentioning his name. For my own part, my emotion is always the same when, *apropos* of some passer-by, one of the thousand marionnettes of our human comedy, political, artistic, or of the world, I hear it said, "He is a Tartarin—a Monpavon—a Delobelle." A thrill runs through me then, the proud thrill of a father, hidden amongst the crowd who applaud his son, and who, all the time is longing to exclaim, "That is my boy!"



## XXV. ZOLA.

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There is probably no writer of to-day—certainly no French writer—regarding whom the popular judgment in England and America has undergone so great a change in the last two years as Émile Zola. Till his letter to President Faure on the Dreyfus case men had attributed artistic defects in the work to moral defects in the man. Now all Anglo-Saxons honor in him not alone the most powerful literary imagination of his country in his generation, but also that magnanimity and higher kind of patriotic courage that is ready to stand for justice against wickedness in high places, and to face the shrieking violence of that “wild fool-fury,” a Parisian mob, in defense of a man wrongfully, though perhaps innocently, condemned for a crime the most hateful to all lovers of their country and their race.

But while this act of moral heroism revealed Zola to the majority of cultured Englishmen and Americans, it only confirmed the judgment of those who knew the man, not in his books alone, but in his life. To them his conduct in this case seemed no more than natural. They had long felt that his devotion to a theory of art had masked the moral dignity of the man from those who felt or had heard that the theory was abused and did not realize that the man was abused also. Zola's art deviates from our ideal beauty; his ethics are a refraction of our ideal good; but his art is great and his ethics are sincere.

All his life has showed that. It has been exemplary in its earnest and indefatigable industry. He has much of the northern French character of his mother, something of the Venetian blood of his father, and a little also of his Greek grandmother's nature. He is at once a realist and an idealist, romantic and naturalistic in his art, sober and hyperbolic in his fancy. His father had been a man of somewhat visionary ideals, an engineer to whose grandiose conceptions the Canal Zola at Aix still bears witness. He died in 1846, when Émile was a boy of six, and the future novelist's youth was passed in growing poverty, partly at Aix, partly at Paris. He earned some distinction at school, and then passed two years in a shifty and squalid bohemianism, until at twenty-two he got a post as bundle clerk in the great publishing house of Hachette.

The instinct of literature was already strong in him, and four years later he abandoned this post to give himself wholly to it—an act that required some courage, since at that time he had written nothing of striking merit; nothing, certainly, that had any promise of the kind of success he was finally to attain. But in 1867 the artist revealed himself at last, and in the full plenitude of genius in "*Thérèse Raquin*." The intensity and minute vision of this terrible analysis of remorse are hardly surpassed. But it is a fierce and a sombre art, oppressed with a vision of the evil that lurks in man. It is the voicing of this oppression that Zola calls "naturalism"—a word that he first used in the preface to this remarkable volume.

"*Madeleine Férat*," that followed, is quite inferior; but we must pause over it for a moment, because it adds the one element needed to complete the novelistic apprenticeship of the author of the "*Rougon-Macquart*"—that is, the conviction of the fatalistic power of heredity on the destinies of man. This thread binds together all the varied

labor of his succeeding years; this is the brain food on which he nursed and fortified the philosophic and pseudo-scientific determinism of the twenty volumes in which he has to trace the social history of a family under the second empire, aiming, he, too, to be, like Balzac, the "secretary of French society."

The general plan of this series, extended though not essentially modified, as it progressed, was conceived in 1869. The last volume of the series appeared in 1893. Zola has since written "*Lourdes*," "*Rome*," "*Paris*." He is also author of some short stories, one of them—" *The Attack on the Mill* "—a masterpiece. But his fame rests so entirely on the "*Rougon-Macquart*," and his genius is so completely manifested there that we may wisely confine to it what there may be space to say of him here.

Let us first take a bird's-eye view of the series. The scene of the introductory novel is Aix, which he calls Plas-sans. Here, as "*The Fortune of the Rougons*" tells us, there was born in 1787 Pierre Rougon, whose mother Adélaïde Fouque, after his father's death, had another son, Antoine Macquart, and a daughter, Ursule Macquart. The mother suffered from a brain lesion, and the effects of this appear in protean forms in her descendants, who spread through all the strata of French society. The children of Antoine sink to the proletariat of labor or of vice. They appear at their best in Jean Macquart ("*Earth*" and "*The Downfall*") ; they exhibit a poised sensuality in the Lisa of "*Parisian Digestion*," a resigned courage in the Pauline of "*The Joy of Life*," and alcoholism in the Gervaise of "*L'Assommoir*," who bequeathes her tendencies to four children, the socialist mining agitator Étienne ("*Germinal*"), the murderous maniac locomotive engineer, Jacques ("*The Beast in Man*"), Claude, a painter, laboring with sterile genius ("*The Work*"), and finally that

poison flower of vice. Nana, a gaudy fly incubated in the hotbed of Parisian luxury and avenging herself on the society that fostered her existence. Thus there are nine novels that deal with the lower social classes and with vice.

Meantime the bourgeoisie finds its representatives in the children of Ursule and her grandchildren, in whom the original lesion appears as cataleptic jealousy in "*A Page of Love*," as mysticism in "*The Dream*," as religious mania in "*Abbé Mouret's Fault*," and as restless and forceful commercial mastery in "*Pot-Bouille*," and "*The Ladies' Delight*." In the Rougon family, finally, political ambition dominates "*The Conquest of Plassans*," and "*His Excellency*," speculative mania "*Booty*," the plutocratic instinct "*Money*," and scientific aspiration "*Dr. Pascal*." And as the members of the Rougon-Macquart thus come in touch with all sections of society they give Zola opportunity for panoramic pictures of the epoch in its gross urban materialism, its sordid rural monotony, or its morose artisan bestiality, as well as in the life of the shops and stores, of studio and camp, of offices, bankers, demagogues, officials, aristocrats, of those on whose folly these batten and of those who batten on their vices. It is, as Zola said, "a world, a society, a civilization," the whole life of a generation is there.

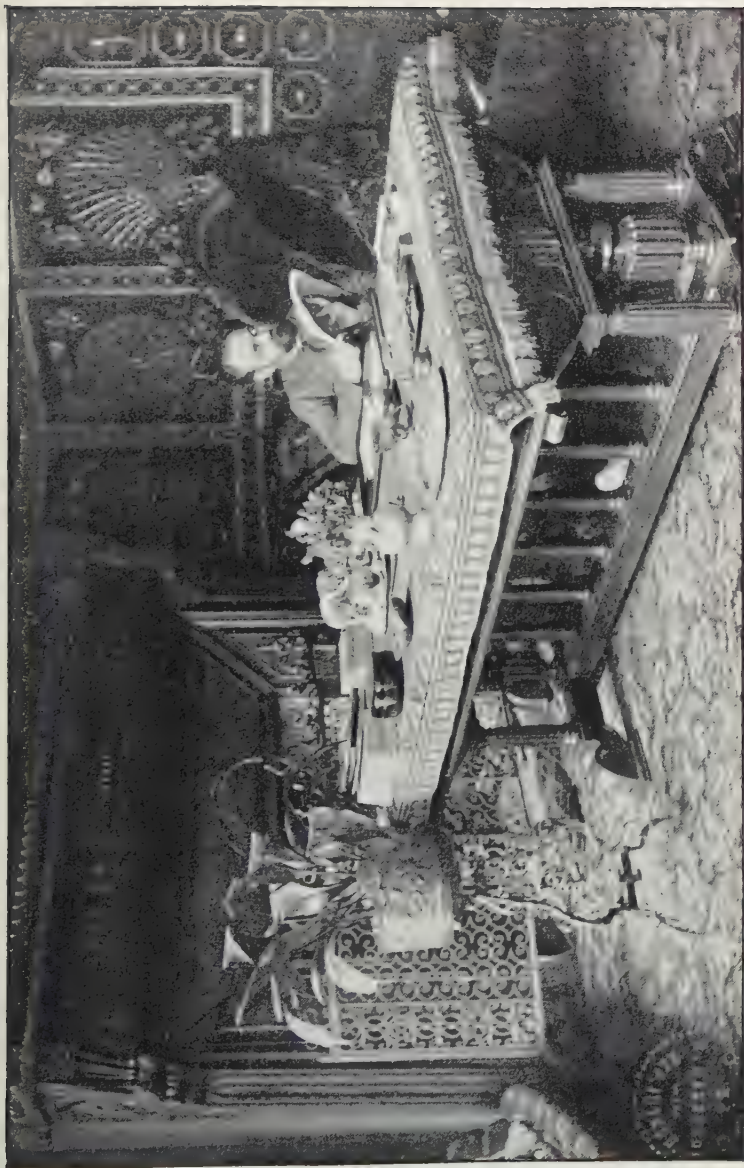
Throughout Zola has sought to tell the truth and the whole truth as he saw it. He took scenes from observation, studied characters from life. Yet what he gives us is not a true perspective of reality, but the vision of an epic poet, gloomy and pessimistic perhaps, but grand and masterful in its presentation of the animal instincts in human nature. His theory of fiction, combined from Taine and Flaubert, was weak, and the volumes of criticism in which he defended it are negligible. His merits lie quite elsewhere. He imagines himself a realist, offering in his

novels "slices of crude life." He is, in fact, a rare combination of pessimist and idealist, tormented as by a nightmare with visions of the blind materialistic forces that drag the beast in man through folly and misery to vice and infamy. He does not paint baseness as it is, but, like the poet and the artist, he gives us the illusion of it, and he does this always with an ethical purpose that in his mind justifies the sordidness and even the obscenity of some melancholy pages that we could wish absent from his work, less indeed on moral than on æsthetic grounds.

This topsy-turvy romanticism will appear at its best in descriptions of masses and crowds, at its weakest in the analysis of character. Hence Zola's best novels are "*Germinal*," with its brutalized masses of striking miners, and "*The Downfall*," where the individual soldier is lost in the mass of regiments on the march, or herded in cattle cars, or surging to and fro on hard-fought fields, or charging to certain destruction. And in both novels we may note, as we may in nearly all the others, some inanimate thing, that recurs symbolically at rhythmic intervals until it seems to have almost as much personality as the actors themselves. In "*Germinal*" it is the mining engine, in "*The Downfall*" Napoleon's luxurious camp-train mocking the misery of the soldier, in "*L'Assommoir*" it is the brandy-still, in "*The Beast in Man*," the locomotive, and so with the rest.

The novels correspond in language and structure to these characteristics of the author's thought. The style is copious, sometimes redundant, depending more on masses than on details, inaccurate, and occasionally even incorrect. It is objective, architectural, methodical, for Zola works more from documents than from sympathetic observation of life. And yet, though we feel that at times his work is ponderous, tactless, gross, its very monotony





EMILE ZOLA IN HIS STUDY

*From a Photograph by Dornac et Cie.*





has a power, and its very brutality seems the struggle of a Titan to express fierce and bitter truths. Always a man of intense convictions, Zola has been for thirty years in France a power, not only in literature and in art, but in morals. He has not always been a power for good, but he has always striven strenuously and gradually, and he has been coming to a clearer vision. He was always to be reckoned with. He has become a man with whom we are glad to reckon.

BENJAMIN W. WELLS.

University of the South.

## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

No personages are to a greater degree than Zola's creations the outcome of the organic forces, climate, temperature, and soil—that is, the outcome of surroundings and heredity. No personages, either, surpass those of Zola in offering to organic forces their own personal, intellectual, and emotional energies; man receiving and man giving; human vibration, which answers in direct proportion to the calls made upon it. Such is the particular side of Zola's work, which, to our mind, leads this work straight to evolution, Darwinism, Spencerism. This is the feature of Zola's literary temperament, leading him to the scientific conclusions which are the basis of these pages.—DE BURY.

### II.

One of the first characteristics that strikes us in M. Zola, and one that has often been pointed out to his honor, is the predominance of will power. Endowed with average talents, by sheer strength of will he has

reached the point he wished to attain, and in just the way he wished. One of the words which recurs oftenest under his pen is the word "conquer." His heroes sally forth from a small provincial shop to conquer Paris. In the same way he has conquered his fame. Ignored for ten years, much contested afterward, he has gone straight ahead, with the same heavy stride, tracing his furrow as he went; he has persisted in the same methods and the same faults, and at last he has carried the day. This willful obstinacy, combined with extreme narrowness of mind, has developed into an imperturbable assurance, and a prodigious confidence in the ideas he has advanced and the work he has done. It is thus that M. Zola has made himself the head of a school. It is commonly said of him that he is a force. Another trait, not less striking, is vulgarity of nature. Whenever M. Zola speaks in his own name, whether in critical work, or in newspaper articles, it is in a tone of the densest triviality. It is not merely wit that he lacks. He has no wit, and he knows it; indeed, far from blinking the fact, he boasts of it; nor is it merely elegance and delicacy that are lacking; it is the most elementary tact. He has been reproached with pride and infatuation with himself, and has denied the charge. I do not, in fact, believe that he has a greater share of pride than many writers who are his inferiors. He merely yields to that instinct impelling vulgar natures to put themselves forward and make a display. He has been reproached also with the violence of his polemics, yet he is not spiteful or malicious—good-natured, rather, but he is naturally emphatic in speech and addicted to loud talk and vociferation about trifles. Therefore he has fallen tooth and nail upon all writers who do not belong to his school, and upon all artists who do not paint like Manet. It is all because he is totally destitute of a sense of measure, and divides humanity summarily into two categories—great, good men, and idiots. This literary man has, moreover, little taste for literature, and only a moderate respect for it, in spite of his loud protestations. He has no literary culture nor desire to acquire it. Of antiquity and of our

great literary epochs he understands only so much as can be acquired by a student at the university who is very much bored at being there. Like all unlettered persons, he makes the history of literature begin with his contemporaries.—RENÉ DOUMIC.

## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM ZOLA.

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### FRANÇOISE AND DOMINIQUE.

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*From "The Attack on the Mill."*

It was high holiday at Father Merlier's mill on that pleasant summer afternoon. Three tables had been brought out into the garden and been placed end to end in the shade of the great elm, and now they were awaiting the arrival of the guests. It was known throughout the length and breadth of the land that that day was to witness the betrothal of old Merlier's daughter, Françoise to Dominique, a young man who was said to be not over fond of work, but whom never a woman for three leagues of the country around could look at without sparkling eyes, such a well-favored young fellow was he.

That mill of Father Merlier's was truly a very pleasant spot. It was situated right in the heart of Rocreuse, at the place where the main road makes a sharp bend. The village has but a single street, bordered on either side by a row of low, whitened cottages, but just there, where the road curves, there are broad stretches of meadowland, and huge trees, which follow the course of the Morelle, cover the low grounds of the valley with a most delicious shade. All Lorraine has no more charming bit of nature to show. To right and left dense forests, great monarchs of the wood, centuries old, rise from the gentle slopes, and fill the horizon with a sea of waving, trembling verdure, while away toward the south extends the plain, of wondrous fertility and chequered almost to infinity with its small inclosures, divided off from one another by their live

hedges. But what makes the crowning glory of Rocreuse is the coolness of this verdurous nook, even in the hottest days of July and August. The Morelle comes down from the woods of Gagny, and it would seem as if it gathered to itself on the way all the delicious freshness of the foliage beneath which it glides for many a league; it brings down with it the murmuring sounds, the glacial, solemn shadows of the forest. And that is not the only source of coolness; there are running waters of all sorts singing among the copses; one can not take a step without coming on a gushing spring, and, as he makes his way along the narrow paths, seems to be treading above the subterranean lakes that seek the air and sunshine through the moss above and profit by every smallest crevice, at the roots of trees or among the chinks and crannies of the rocks, to burst forth in fountains of crystalline clearness. So numerous and so loud are the whispering voices of these streams that they silence the song of the bullfinches. It is as if one were in an enchanted park, with cascades falling and flashing on every side.

The meadows below are never athirst. The shadows beneath gigantic chestnut trees are of inky blackness, and along the edges of the fields long rows of poplars stand like walls of rustling foliage. There is a double avenue of huge plane trees ascending across the fields toward the ancient castle of Gagny, now gone to rack and ruin. In this region, where drought is never known, vegetation of all kinds is wonderfully rank; it is like a flower garden down there in the low ground between those two wooded hills, where the lawns are broad meadows and the giant trees represent colossal beds. When the noonday sun pours down his scorching rays the shadows lie blue upon the ground, vegetation slumbers in the genial warmth, while every now and then a breath of almost icy coldness ruffles the foliage.

Such was the spot where Father Merlier's mill enlivened nature run riot with its cheerful clack. The building itself, constructed of wood and plaster, looked as if it might be coeval with our planet. Its foundations were in part laved by the Morelle, which here expands into a clear pool. A dam, a few feet in height, afforded sufficient head of water to drive the old wheel, which creaked and groaned as it revolved, with the asthmatic wheezing of a faithful servant who had grown old in

her place. When Father Merlier was advised to change it, he would shake his head and say that like as not a young wheel would be lazier and not so well acquainted with its duties, and then he would set to work and patch up the old one with anything that came to hand, old hogshead-staves, bits of rusty iron, zinc, or lead. The old wheel only seemed the gayer for it, with its odd, round countenance, all plumed and feathered with tufts of moss and grass, and when the water poured over it in a silvery tide its gaunt black skeleton was decked out with a gorgeous display of pearls and diamonds.

That portion of the mill which was bathed by the Morelle had something of the look of a Moorish arch that had been dropped down there by chance. A good half of the structure was built on piles; the water came in under the floor, and there were deep holes, famous throughout the whole country for the eels and huge crawfish that were to be caught there. Below the fall the pool was as clear as a looking-glass, and when it was not clouded by foam from the wheel one could see great fish swimming about in it with the slow, majestic movements of a fleet. There was a broken stairway leading down to the stream, near a stake to which a boat was fastened, and over the wheel was a gallery of wood. Such windows as there were were arranged without any attempt at order. The whole was a quaint conglomeration of nooks and corners, bits of wall, additions made here and there as afterthoughts, beams and roofs, that gave the mill the aspect of an old dismantled citadel, but ivy and all sorts of creeping plants had grown luxuriantly and kindly covered up such crevices as were too unsightly, casting a mantle of green over the old dwelling. Young ladies who passed that way used to stop and sketch Father Merlier's mill in their albums.

The side of the house that faced the road was less irregular. A gateway in stone afforded access to the principal courtyard, on the right and left hand of which were sheds and stables. Beside a well stood an immense stable that threw its shade over half the court. At the further end, opposite the gate, stood the house, surmounted by a dovecote, the four windows of its first floor symmetrically aligned. The only manifestation of pride that Father Merlier ever allowed himself was to paint this façade every ten years. It had just been freshly whitened at the

time of our story, and dazzled the eyes of all the village when the sun lighted it up in the middle of the day.

For twenty years had Father Merlier been mayor of Rocreuse. He was held in great consideration on account of his fortune; he was supposed to be worth something like eighty thousand francs, the result of patient saving. When he married Madeleine Guilliard, who brought him the mill as her dowry, his entire capital lay in his two strong arms, but Madeleine had never repented of her choice, so manfully had he conducted their joint affairs. Now his wife was dead, and he was left a widower with his daughter Françoise. Doubtless he might have sat himself down to take his rest and suffered the old mill-wheel to sleep among its moss, but he would have found the occupation too irksome and the house would have seemed dead to him, so he kept on working still, for the pleasure of it. In those days Father Merlier was a tall old man, with a long, unspeaking face, on which a laugh was never seen, but beneath which there lay, none the less, a large fund of good-humor. He had been elected mayor on account of his money, and also for the impressive air that he knew how to assume when it devolved on him to marry a couple.

Françoise Merlier had just completed her eighteenth year. She was small, and for that reason was not accounted one of the beauties of the country. Until she reached the age of fifteen she was even homely; the good folks of Rocreuse could not see how it was that the daughter of Father and Mother Merlier, such a hale, vigorous couple, had such a hard time of it in getting her growth. When she was fifteen, however, though still remaining delicate, a change came over her and she took on the prettiest little face imaginable. She had black eyes, black hair, and was red as a rose withal; her little mouth was always graced with a charming smile, there were delicious dimples in her cheeks, and a crown of sunshine seemed to be ever resting on her fair, candid forehead. Although small as girls went in that region she was far from being slender; she might not have been able to raise a sack of wheat to her shoulder, but she became quite plump with age and gave promise of becoming eventually as well rounded and appetizing as a partridge. Her father's habits of taciturnity had made her reflective while yet a young girl; if she always had a smile on her lips it was in



order to give pleasure to others. Her natural disposition was serious.

As was no more than to be expected, she had every young man in the countryside at her heels as a suitor, more even for her money than for her attractiveness, and she had made a choice at last, a choice that had been the talk and scandal of the entire neighborhood. On the other side of the Morelle lived a strapping young fellow who went by the name of Dominique Penquer. He was not to the manor born; ten years previously he had come to Rocreuse from Belgium to receive the inheritance of an uncle who had owned a small property on the very borders of the forest of Gagny, just facing the mill and distant from it only a few musket shots. His object in coming was to sell the property, so he said, and return to his own home again; but he must have found the land to his liking, for he made no move to go away. He was seen cultivating his bit of a field and gathering the few vegetables that afforded him an existence. He hunted, he fished; more than once he was near coming in contact with the law through the intervention of the keepers. This independent way of living, of which the peasants could not very clearly see the resources, had in the end given him a bad name. He was vaguely looked on as nothing better than a poacher. At all events he was lazy, for he was frequently found sleeping in the grass at hours when he should have been at work. Then, too, the hut in which he lived, in the shade of the last trees of the forest, did not seem like the abode of an honest young man; the old women would not have been surprised at any time to hear that he was on friendly terms with the wolves in the woods of Gagny. Still, the young girls would now and then venture to stand up for him, for he was altogether a splendid specimen of manhood, was this individual of doubtful antecedents, tall and straight as a young poplar, with a milk-white skin and ruddy hair and beard that seemed to be of gold when the sun shone on them. Now, one fine morning, it came to pass that Françoise told Father Merlier that she loved Dominique and that never, never would she consent to marry any other young man.

It may be imagined what a knock-down blow it was that Father Merlier received that day! As was his wont, he said never a word; his countenance wore his usual reflective look, only the fun

that used to bubble up no longer shone in his eyes. Françoise, too, was very serious, and for a week father and daughter scarcely spoke to each other. What troubled Father Merlier was to know how that rascal of a poacher had succeeded in bewitching his daughter. Dominique had never shown himself at the mill. The miller played the spy a little, and was rewarded by catching sight of the gallant, on the other side of the Morelle, lying among the grass and pretending to be asleep. Françoise could see him from her chamber window. The thing was clear enough; they had been making sheep's-eyes at each other over the old millwheel, and so had fallen in love. A week slipped by; Françoise became more and more serious. Father Merlier still continued to say nothing. Then one evening, of his own accord, he brought Dominique to the house, without a word. Françoise was just setting the table. She made no demonstration of surprise; all she did was to add another plate, but her laugh had come back to her and the little dimples appeared again upon her cheeks. Father Merlier had gone that morning to look for Dominique at his hut on the edge of the forest, and there the two men had had a conference, with closed doors and windows, that lasted three hours. No one ever knew what they said to each other; the only thing certain is that when Father Merlier left the hut he already treated Dominique as a son. Doubtless the old man had discovered that he whom he had gone to visit was a worthy young man, even though he did lie in the grass to gain the love of young girls.

All Rocreuse was up in arms. The women gathered at their doors and could not find words strong enough to characterize Father Merlier's folly in thus receiving a ne'er-do-well into his family. He let them talk. Perhaps he thought of his own marriage. Neither had he possessed a penny to his name at the time when he married Madeleine and her mill, and yet that had not prevented him from being a good husband to her. Moreover, Dominique put an end to their tittle-tattle by setting to work in such strenuous fashion that all the countryside was amazed. It so happened just then that the boy of the mill drew an unlucky number and had to go for a soldier, and Dominique would not hear of their engaging another. He lifted sacks, drove the cart, wrestled with the old wheel when it took an obstinate fit and refused to turn, and all so pluckily and cheerfully that people came from far and near merely for the pleasure of seeing him. Father

Merlier laughed his silent laugh. He was highly elated that he had read the youngster aright. There is nothing like love to hearten up young men.

In the midst of all that laborious toil Françoise and Dominique fairly worshiped each other. They had not much to say, but their tender smiles conveyed a world of meaning. Father Merlier had not said a word thus far on the subject of their marriage, and they had both respected his silence, waiting until the old man should see fit to give expression to his will. At last, one day along toward the middle of July, he had had three tables laid in the courtyard, in the shade of the big elm, and had invited his friends of Rocreuse to come that afternoon and drink a glass of wine with him. When the courtyard was filled with people, and everyone there had a full glass in his hand, Father Merlier raised his own high above his head and said :

“ I have the pleasure of announcing to you that Françoise and this stripling will be married in a month from now, on Saint-Louis’s fête-day.”

Then there was a universal touch of glasses, attended by a tremendous uproar ; everyone was laughing. But Father Merlier, raising his voice above the din, again spoke :

“ Dominique, kiss your wife that is to be. It is no more than customary.”

And they kissed, very red in the face, both of them, while the company laughed louder still. It was a regular fête ; they emptied a small cask. Then, when only the intimate friends of the house remained, conversation went on in a calmer strain. Night had fallen, a starlit night and very clear. Dominique and Françoise sat on a bench, side by side, and said nothing. An old peasant spoke of the war that the Emperor had declared against Prussia. All the lads of the village were already gone off to the army. Troops had passed through the place only the night before. There were going to be hard knocks.

“ Bah ! ” said Father Merlier, with the selfishness of a man who is quite happy, “ Dominique is a foreigner, he won’t have to go—and if the Prussians come this way, he will be here to defend his wife.”

The idea of the Prussians coming there seemed to the company an exceedingly good joke. The army would give them one good, conscientious thrashing, and the affair would be quickly ended.

"I have seen them, I have seen them," the old peasant repeated in a low voice.

There was silence for a little, and they all touched glasses once again. Françoise and Dominique had heard nothing; they had managed to clasp hands behind the bench in such a way as not to be seen by the others, and this condition of affairs seemed so beatific to them that they sat there, mute, their gaze lost in the darkness of the night.

What a magnificent, balmy night! The village lay slumbering on either side of the white road, as peacefully as a little child. The deep silence was undisturbed save by the occasional crow of a cock in some distant barnyard, acting on a mistaken impression that dawn was at hand. Perfumed breaths of air, like long-drawn sighs, almost came down from the great woods that lay around and above, sweeping softly over the roofs, as if caressing them. The meadows, with their black intensity of shadow, took on a dim, mysterious majesty of their own, while all the springs, all the brooks and watercourses that gurgled and trickled in the darkness, might have been taken for the cool and rhythmical breathing of the sleeping country. Every now and then the old, dozing mill-wheel, like a watchdog that barks uneasily in his slumber, seemed to be dreaming, as if it were endowed with some strange form of life; it creaked, it groaned, it talked to itself, rocked by the fall of the Morelle, whose current gave forth the deep, sustained music of an organ-pipe. Never was there a more charming or a happier nook, never did more entire or deeper peace come down to cover it.\*

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\* The foregoing beautiful pastoral is the opening chapter—there are only five chapters altogether—in one of the finest and strongest pieces of realistic tragedy writing in all literature.

## XXVI. DE MAUPASSANT.

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The more carefully we study the history of fiction the more clearly we perceive that the novel and the short story are essentially different—that the difference between them is not one of mere length only, but fundamental. The short story seeks one set of effects in its own way, and the novel seeks a wholly distinct set of effects in a wholly distinct way. We are led also to the conclusion that the short story—in spite of the fact that in our language it has no name of its own—is one of the few sharply defined literary forms. It is a genre, as M. Brunetière terms it, a species, as a naturalist might call it, as individual as the lyric itself, and as various. It is as distinct an entity as the epic, as tragedy, as comedy. Now the novel is not a form of the same sharply defined individuality; it is—or at least it may be—anything. It is the child of the epic, and the heir of the drama; but it is a hybrid and a bastard. And one of the foremost of living American novelists, who happens also to be one of the most acute and sympathetic of American critics, told me that he was often distracted by the knowledge of this fact even while he was writing a novel.

In the history of literature the short story was developed long before the novel, which indeed is but a creature of yesterday. The short story also seems much easier of accomplishment than the novel, if only because it is briefer. And yet the list of the masters of the short story is far less crowded than the list of the masters of the longer form.

There are a dozen or more very great novelists recorded in the history of fiction, but there are scarcely more than half a dozen short-story writers. From Chaucer and Boccaccio we pass to Hawthorne and Poe almost, without finding another name that insists upon enrollment. A little later we light upon Mérimée and Turgénéf, whose title to be recorded there is none to dispute. Now at the end of the nineteenth century we find two more that no competent critic would dare to omit—Guy de Maupassant and Rudyard Kipling.

Guy de Maupassant, born in 1850, had the usual education given to the son of French parents neither rich nor poor. In the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 he did his duty as a soldier. When peace came at last he received a position in the civil service—a clerkship in the navy department that paid him \$300 a year. His school days had been passed at Rouen, where he had come under the influence of Louis Bouilhet, a French poet of a celebrity now a little faded. His new post was in Paris, where he was enabled to avail himself of the kindly advice of Gustave Flaubert, the author of that merciless masterpiece, "*Madame Bovary*."

In the preface of "*Pierre et Jean*" Maupassant has recorded how he learned from Bouilhet that a single lyric, a scant one hundred lines, would give immortality to a poet if they were only fine enough; and that for the author who sought to escape oblivion there was only one course to pursue—to learn his trade thoroughly, to master every secret of the craft, to do his best always, in the hope that some fortunate day the muse would reward his unfailing devotion. And from Flaubert the young man learned the importance of individuality, of originality, of the personal note which should be all his own, and which should never suggest or recall any one else's. Flaubert



was kindly and encouraging, but he was a desperately severe taskmaster. At Flaubert's dictation Maupassant gave up verse for prose, and for seven years he wrote incessantly and published nothing. The stories and tales and verses and dramas of those seven years of apprenticeship were ruthlessly criticised by the author of "*Madame Bovary*," and then they were destroyed unprinted. No other author ever served so severe a novitiate.

Douglas Jerrold once said of a certain British author, who had begun to publish very young, that: "He had taken down the shutters before he had anything to put up in the shop window." From being transfixed by such a jibe Maupassant was preserved by Flaubert. When he was thirty he contributed to the *Soirées de Medan* that masterpiece of ironic humor, "*Boule de Suif*," and on his first appearance in the arena of letters he stepped at once to the front rank. That was in 1880, and in 1892 his mind gave way and he was taken to the asylum, where he soon died. In those twelve years he had published a dozen volumes of short stories and half a dozen novels. Of the novel he might have made himself master in time; of the short story he proved himself a master with the very earliest of all his tales to appear.

It must be admitted at once that many of his earlier short stories have to do with the lower aspects of man's merely animal activity. Maupassant had an abundance of what the French themselves call "Gallic salt." His humor was not squeamish; it delighted in dealing with themes that our Anglo-Saxon prudery prefers not to touch. But even at the beginning, this liking for what those of us who speak English avoid in print, never led him to put dirt where dirt was not an essential element of his narrative. Dirty many of these tales were, no doubt, but many of them were not. He never went out of his way to offend, as not a few of





HENRI RENÉ ALBERT GUY DE MAUPASSANT

*Photo by Nadar*



his compatriots seem to enjoy doing. He handled whatever subject he took with the same absolute understanding of its value, of the precise treatment best suited to it. If it was a dirty theme he had chosen—and he had no prejudice against such a theme—he did whatever was needful to get the most out of his subject. If it was not a dirty theme, then there was never any touch of the tar brush. When Mr. Jonathan Sturges came to select out of all Maupassant's work the exquisite tales which he translated most skillfully and to which he gave the title of "*The Odd Number*," he had not to omit or modify or to attenuate a single word in all the thirteen.

These earlier tales also were not a little hard and stern and unsympathetic—and here again Maupassant was the disciple of Flaubert. They were cold and they were contemptuous—at least, they made the reader feel that the author heartily despised the creatures he was depicting. They dealt mainly by the externals of life with outward actions, and they implied not always adequately the internal motives. But in time the mind came to interest Maupassant as much as the body. In his later tales there is even a tendency toward the psychology of the morbid. The thought of death and the dread of mental disease seemed to possess him. In "*Le Horla*," for example, we find Maupassant taking for his own Fitzjames O'Brien's uncanny monster, invisible and yet tangible; and the Frenchman gave it an added touch of terror by making the unfortunate victim discover that the creature he feared had a stronger will than his own, and that he was being hypnotized to his doom by a being whom he could not see, but whose presence he could feel.

The short stories of Maupassant are masterpieces of the art of story-telling, because he had a Greek sense of form, a Latin power of construction, and a French felicity of

style. They are simple, most of them; direct, swift, inevitable, and inexorable in their straightforward movement. If art consists in the suppression of non-essentials, there have been few greater artists in fiction than Maupassant. In his tales there is never a word wasted, and there is never an excursus. Nor is there any feebleness or fumbling. What he wanted to do he did, with the unerring certainty of Leatherstocking, hitting the bull's-eye again and again. He had the abundance and the ease of the very great artists, and the half-dozen or the half-score of his best stories are among the very best short stories in any language.

BRANDER MATTHEWS.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Flaubert was not the sole inspirer and master of Maupassant. Mérimée's short tales, it is very evident, also guided him. Though perhaps less imaginative than Mérimée, and more turned to psychology, Maupassant has a style which at times reminds one of Mérimée's. The majority of the heroes, too, are the same pessimistic, ironical personalities as in Mérimée, though Maupassant's irony is perhaps more tempered with generous pity than is the case with the author of "*Carmen*." We should not forget, either, that Maupassant, who died in 1893, was taken in the prime of his years, so that his pessimism was a fruit of his own mood—a result of the atmosphere which he breathed, rather than, as with Mérimée, the outcome of disillusion and of the tedious monotony of things and of life generally.—DE BURY.

## II.

A life wholly comprised in ten years of incessant literary production, in labor that was prolific without haste; starting with the instant conquest of celebrity and ending suddenly in hopeless madness; the life of a man who sought to enjoy everything with his mind and body at the same time; of an artist who, from the day when he created his first work of art until the final hour when the pen dropped from his fingers, never experienced the slightest diminution of talent, but advanced steadily, with his eyes fixed on perfection; a brief and crowded life, which has a beauty of its own from the æsthetic standpoint, and a certain moral beauty also, since in the struggle with the difficulties of form and the more poignant struggle against the encroachments of his malady it testifies to a continual effort of will—such is the life of Maupassant! And his work is one, amid all its varieties—one in its inward principle of action, however modified by the influences that pervade the air, in an artistic period; always directed toward the study of certain subjects, and yet reflecting all the manifold and changing aspects of reality; a work in which there is little that is mediocre and insignificant, and parts of which seem made of lasting material, capable of resisting the gnawing tooth of time—such is Maupassant's work! And it is because of this life and this work that the announcement of his death left none of us unmoved.—RENÉ DOUMIC.

## III.

This living realism is absolutely pure with Guy de Maupassant. He was rarely even tempted toward the study and description of what are called the upper classes, or by the luxury which fascinated Balzac. His predilection for ordinary scenes and ordinary types is everywhere evident; he uses all kinds of settings—a café, a furnished room, a farmyard, seen in their actual character without poetic transfiguration, with all their vul-

garity, their poverty, their ugliness. And he uses, too, all kinds of characters—clerks, peasants of Normandy, petty bourgeois of Paris and of the country. They live the empty, tragic, or grotesque hours of their lives; are sometimes touching, sometimes odious, and never achieve greatness either in heroism or in wickedness. They are not gay, these stories; and the kind of amusement they afford is strongly mixed with irony, pity, and contempt. Gayety, whether brutal, frank, mocking, or delicate, never leaves this bitter taste in the heart. How pitiful in its folly, in its vanity, in its weakness, is the humanity which loves, weeps, or agitates in the tales of Maupassant! There virtue, if awkward, is never recompensed, nor vice, if skillful, punished; mothers are not always saints nor sons always grateful and respectful, the guilty are often ignorant of remorse. Then are these beings immoral? To tell the truth, they are guided by their instincts, by events, submissive to the laws of necessity and apparently released by the author from all responsibility.—FIRMIN ROZ.

XXVII.—THE DISTINGUISHING CHARACTER-  
ISTICS OF FRENCH IMAGINATIVE LIT-  
ERATURE. A SUMMARY.\*

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The first thing, and perhaps the most important thing, which must strike anyone who looks upon French literature as a whole is that, taking all conditions together, it is the most complete example of a regularly and independently developed national literature that presents itself anywhere. It is no doubt inferior in the point of independence to Greek, but then it has a much longer course, considered as the exponent of national character. It has a shorter course than English, and it is not more generally expository of national characteristics; but then it is for a great part of that course infinitely more independent of foreign influences, and, unlike English, it has scarcely any breaks or dead seasons in its record. Compared with Latin (which as a literature may be said to be entirely modeled on Greek) it is exceptionally original; compared with Spanish and Italian it has been exceptionally long-lived and hale in its life; compared with German it was exceptionally early in attaining the full possession of its faculties. Just as (putting aside minor and somewhat pedantic considerations) no country in Europe has so long and so independently developed a political history, so in none has literary history developed itself more independently

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\* Selected and abridged from Professor George Saintsbury's "*History of French Literature*."



and for a longer space of continuous time. No foreign invasion sensibly affects the French tongue; no foreign influence sensibly alters the course of French literature.

The French made their own epic, their own lyric, their own comic and miscellaneous drama. They may be said almost to have invented the peculiar and striking kind of history called the memoir, which has characteristics distinguishing it radically from the classical commentary. They apparently invented the essay, and though they only borrowed the beast fable, they are entitled to the credit of having seen in it the germ of the short-verse tale which has no direct moral bearing. All the nations of Europe, so to speak, sent during the Middle Ages their own raw material of subject to be worked up by French or French-speaking men into literary form. France therefore gives (next to Greece, and in some respects even before Greece) the most instructive and trustworthy example extant of the chronology and order of spontaneous literary development—first poetry, then drama, then prose; in poetry, first epic, then lyric, then didactic and miscellaneous verse; in drama, first ceremonial and liturgic pieces, then comedy, then artificial tragedy; in prose, first history, then miscellaneous work, and lastly artificial and elaborate fiction. . . .

French literature, notwithstanding the revolution of fifty years ago, is generally and rightly held to be the chief representative among the greater European literatures of the classical rather than the romantic spirit. It is therefore necessary to define what is meant by these much controverted terms. . . .

The terms classic and romantic apply to treatment, not to subject, and the difference is that the treatment is classic when the idea is represented as directly and with as exact an adaptation of form as possible, while it is romantic when

the idea is left to the reader's faculty of divination assisted only by suggestion and symbol. Of these two modes of treatment France has always inclined to the classic; during at least two centuries, the seventeenth and eighteenth, she relied upon it almost wholly. But the fertility of her mediæval and renaissance literature in strictly romantic examples and the general tendency of the literature of the nineteenth century have shown a romantic faculty inferior, but only inferior, to the classical. To illustrate this statement by a contrast, it may be pointed out that in Greek the romantic element is always in abeyance, while in English all without exception of our greatest masterpieces have been purely romantic. Or to put the matter in yet other words, the sense of the vague is, among authors of the highest rank, rarely present to a Greek, always present to an Englishman, and alternately present and absent, but oftener absent, to a Frenchman.

The qualities which this general differentia has developed in French may now be enumerated:

The first is a great and remarkable *sobriety*. It is true that there is nothing more extravagant than an extravagant Frenchman, but that is the natural result of reaction. As a rule, the contributions of matter which France received so abundantly from other nations are always toned and sobered by her in their literary formation. The main materials of her wonderful mediæval literature of fiction were furnished by Wales, by Germany, and by the East; all of them, to judge by the later but more or less independent handlings which we have from indigenous sources, must have teemed with the supernatural.

The next characteristic is abundant and almost superabundant *wit*. . . . In classical literature wit is notoriously absent, with rare exceptions; in scarcely any other modern literature does it make its appearance early. But

it shows in French by the twelfth century, and it increases during every century that succeeds; while joined to sobriety it begets that satirical criticism which is so noteworthy a secondary product of French.

A third quality, closely connected with the two former, but not, like satirical criticism, simply derived from them, is the close *attention to form* which has always distinguished the French. At the present time, despite the great advance made by other literatures and a certain falling off in itself, French prose is on the average superior in formal merit to any other prose written in a modern language.

A fourth merit is to be found in the *inventiveness* of Frenchmen of letters. In no literature is there a greater variety, and in none is that variety so obviously the effect not of happy blundering but of organized and almost scientific development of the possibilities of art. At the present day, in one important department of literature (the drama) inventiveness is almost limited to Frenchmen, and there are few periods of their present history at which they have not in this respect led the van in one department or another.

Yet another characteristic must be noted, which is, in respect to matter, the complement of the already mentioned attention to form. This is the singular *clearness* and *precision* with which not merely the greatest Frenchmen of letters, but all save the least, are accustomed to put their meaning. Whereas the two great classical languages, from the license of order, given by their abundant inflections and complicated syntax, are sometimes enigmatic; whereas German notoriously lends itself to the wrapping up of a simple meaning in a cloud of words; whereas English seems to encourage those who use it not indeed to obscurity, but to desultoriness and beating about the bush, French properly used is almost automatically clear and precise.

## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Alphonse Daudet is of the same school as Zola, although not of the same family. There exists as much dissimilarity between these two novelists as is possible between those who make profession of naturalism. Profession? In reality this word is much more applicable to Zola than to Daudet, who can scarcely be said to have acknowledged any doctrine. In this consists an evident divergence, and if we would note the contrasts of their natures it will be well to begin by opposing what is deliberate and methodical in the one, with the spontaneity, the indifference to doctrine and heedless vivacity of the other. In Daudet's words, Zola proceeds "like his engineer father;" he advances slowly and surely, daily transcribing his three or four pages with mechanical regularity. Daudet composes his novels much less than they are composed unconsciously. Writing "wholesale," he throws ideas and events upon paper without giving himself time for a complete or even a correct wording. In this condition he leaves them to return later to his first inspiration. While Zola studies printed documents, or unwittingly abandons himself to his instinct of divination, Daudet confines himself closely to living reality, and his entire method consists in fixing the direct impressions he has gathered. The one betrays nothing of himself; the other throws himself completely into his work. The one does not retreat from what is ignoble, but rather seems to delight in it, and his work only merits the name of realism when it exposes to all eyes the vileness of human bestiality. The other portrays evil with no less force, but is always holding himself above what is too obscene in reality, for his delicacy suffers from contact with vulgarity and certain odors nauseate him. The first employs a language too dense, too compact, and too forcible in its ponderousness; the sec-

and writes in the airiest, most flexible, most evanescent of styles, always in motion, intangible in its variety, so vivid, so rapid, and so spontaneous, that it seems to speak.—PELLISSIER,

## II.

As was the case with many young men at that time, Victor Hugo was Zola's ideal. He knew all his poems by heart. There was not a more thorough romancist than Émile. His liking for Hugo bordered on veneration, and he was never as happy as when, in the evening, he read for his mother from the "*Odes and Ballads*" or the "*Orientales*," which, despite all that may be said in praise of his subsequent works, will be considered by many as the poet's masterpieces. Later in life, when Zola began to read meditatively, his favorite authors were Musset, Balzac, Flaubert, and Taine. From the latter he derived that quiet, firm, and methodical analysis which constitutes his power. But owing to some change in the custom-house administration, the unfortunate Émile was dismissed. He wandered through Paris aimlessly and unmindful of all that was going on around him. He would often pass a whole day sitting on a bench in the garden of the Luxembourg, writing verses, while his pocket and stomach were empty.—MAURICE MAURIS.

## XXVIII. "A CENTURY OF CRITICISM AND HISTORY."

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The nineteenth century in French literature has been called "a century of criticism and history," and there is good reason for the description. We have seen how in the field of imaginative writing the dominant characteristic was for a long time romanticism. We have also seen how romanticism gradually showed differentiations, and how; in the realistic and sociologic fiction of Balzac, in the novel of contemporary life of George Sand, in the idyllic novel, and in the social novel of the later years of George Sand, and in the naturalistic novel of Flaubert and his successors, etc., the genius of French men and women of letters in this century has been truly many-sided. We have also seen how in the vast scheme that Balzac contemplated in his "*Comédie Humaine*," the scientific spirit of the age had entered the realm of fiction and endeavored to erect a structure that should be at once imaginative and scientific, at once a work of art and a record, an accurate documentary account, of the social life of the age. And we have seen how a somewhat similar scientific spirit has been a prominent feature in the work of many later writers of fiction.

All this is but another way of saying that the spirit of the age is complex, and that with the purely literary purpose of the literary artist—the purpose of giving enjoyment—there are frequently mixed purposes of another sort—as for example, to instruct, to prove, to edify, to estab-



lish, to enlighten; or to condemn, to break down, to destroy—and that to effect these latter purposes the writer will use whatever methods seem best suited to him; which, in an age so dominated by the scientific spirit of inquiry and investigation as this age is, are almost always likely to be more or less scientific methods.

This being so, it could not help but be that when the scientific spirit was applied to such departments of literature as criticism and history—departments in which in anterior ages individual methods were most wont to be used—results would be produced so striking as to excite universal attention. It is the universal attention which these results have aroused that has caused this century in French literature to be called, and in a measure to be justly called, “a century of criticism and history.”

In the eighteenth century, as indeed in all previous centuries, literary criticism had been mainly based on dogma or acknowledged authority—that is to say, it was more or less a matter of personal opinion. In the beginning of the present century, with the appearance of Madame de Staël's “*Germany*,” a new era began. Criticism was no longer the echo of authority or the expression of a personal taste. On the contrary, it tried to find a basis for arriving at conclusions in real things—things objective to the critic. In particular, natural causes were examined, such as climates, soils, national habits, ethnic differences, etc. For example, it was seen that in the past French authors had been classicists, German authors romanticists, not through personal whim or taste entirely, but largely because of national and ethnic affiliations.

Later in the century VILLEMAIN (1790-1870) enlarged the basis. He took into consideration not merely the national environment of an author, but also the historic condition and antecedents of the age in which the author's



work was produced. Literature, like politics, like art, like science, like social and individual effort of every sort, was the necessary product of its age, and must be examined and judged accordingly.

Succeeding Villemain came one who, though he acknowledged Villemain as a master, was an incomparably greater spirit. SAINTE-BEUVE (1804-1869), whose work we have already to some extent considered, looked upon criticism as an art that demanded in its professors the profoundest knowledge. To estimate a book the critic should not only know the national environment in which its author lived, and the historic antecedents of that environment, but also the local environment, and the antecedents of that local environment. In short, he should know all the psychologic circumstances of the production of the book—the author's life, his character, his parentage, his education, his beliefs, his aims, his friendships, his enmities, his hopes, his fears. Then, and then only, could the critic be in position to pass judgment; and even then only when by wide study and deep contemplation he had been prepared to express as his own judgment what might fairly be called the judgment of a whole enlightened community. Sainte-Beuve's qualifications for his work were the amplest, but there was one primary deficiency. His critical discretion was not illuminated by a polestar. He lacked a guiding principle of judgment. Too often, also, he was satisfied by mere exposition and explanation.

In TAINÉ (1828-1893), who was in some respects a disciple of Sainte-Beuve, the scientific spirit in criticism reached its highest manifestation. Taine accounted for, explained, compared, and classified, and did nothing else. Not throughout all his life, however; for before his career closed he saw clearly enough that this method of criticism was deficient. The critic, he acknowledged at last, must

have a final purpose, a definite object, a view—the enforcement of moral truth. He must discover the ethical worth of a work in literature or his labor would be vain. And so, in the end, Taine came to do systematically and of set purpose what Sainte-Beuve had been in the habit of doing by the mere impulse of his ethical intuitions. Criticism was restored to its old throne in the domain of morals, but the laws of its government were, as far as possible, made definite and ascertainable.

In the historical literature of the epoch there has been, as may be supposed, a far greater range of informing idea and of aim.

THIERRY (1795-1856) was the earliest historian in the century to become possessed of the century's ideals. History in his hands became not merely a record of events, but an account of the inevitableness of events. Epochs differ from one another because of the dominancy of certain races in them, and races have characteristics that are as irreducible as the characters of individuals. They can be only modified—never wholly changed. But Thierry was not merely an historian; he was a poet. And though, unfortunately, he was blind during a great period of his working life, his history, for all its philosophizing, has the glow of a great epic.

GUIZOT (1787-1874) is the subject of a special study. THIERS (1797-1877), the chief rival of Guizot in politics, was also his chief rival in the estimation of the public as a philosophic historian. The reconstructor of France after the downfall of the second empire, to some extent also the cause of that downfall, Thiers had been, strange to say, through his histories of the revolution, the consulate, and the empire, the reconstructor of that Napoleonic legend to whose influence the second empire largely owed its establishment. Though not a great historian, nor even a great

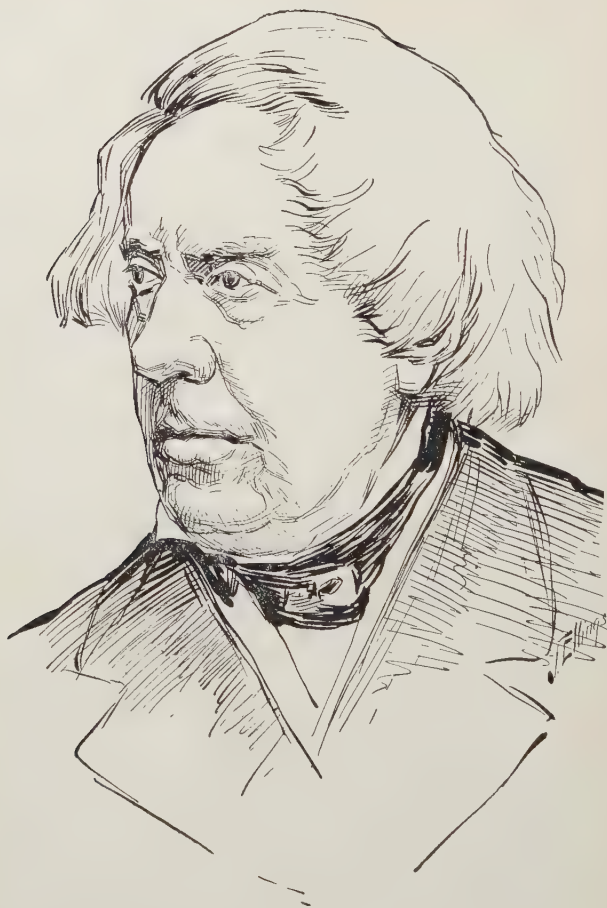
stylist as an historian, he yet was able to write history full of information, and full of ideas that aroused the patriotic sentiments of his fellow-countrymen. This brought him



M. THIERS.

fame and influence. In the end he was president of the republic.

DE TOCQUEVILLE (1805-1859), though born considerably later than either Guizot or Thiers, seems to belong to a remoter age, for unfortunately he had poor health and died comparatively young. Indeed, his most famous work,



MICHELET.

"*Democracy in America*," was produced in 1835, when he was only thirty years of age. Yet of all the writers of the century De Tocqueville is perhaps the best illustration we have of an historian pursuing historical inquiry with that

perfect spirit of candor, and that perfect absence of prepossession, which are the characteristics of all true scientific inquiry.

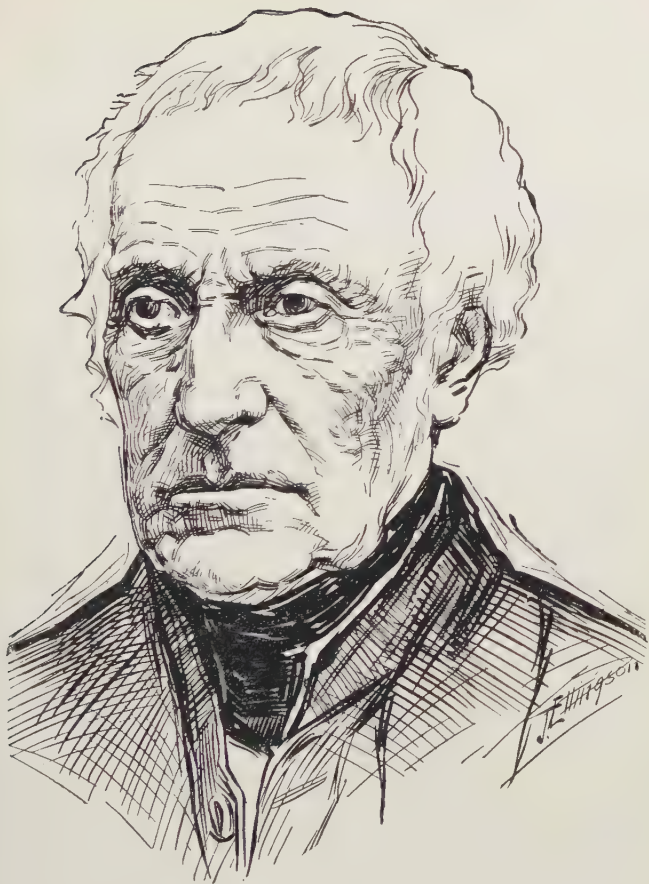
Of MICHELET (1798-1874), the Carlyle of French historical literature, it is difficult to speak without enthusiasm. A poet like Thierry, but greater and more individualistic, a poet "to the very ends of his fingers," as the French say, Michelet's personality pervades all he writes, and his style, and no less his views and his expositions, are characteristic to the last degree. More than any other historian of the century, Michelet was impressed with the moral significance of the study of history. To him, his country, France, was an entity, a real being of life and character. Her faults he depicted relentlessly; but her charms, her merits, her glories, he portrayed with a lover's warmth. He was thus not a scientific or a realistic historian; he was an idealist and an optimist. He had his demerits—prejudices, for example, that it is hard to overlook. But while these have brought upon him the censure of foreign critics they have but endeared him all the more to his countrymen. If the impressive presentation of the subject be a supreme excellence in history writing, Michelet is the greatest of all French historians.

## XXIX. GUIZOT.

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François Guizot was born in Nîmes, October 4, 1787. His parents, of Huguenot ancestry, were known for their fidelity to their faith. As the Protestants had no civil rights, and their marriage by a pastor was considered null, the future historian was, before the law, an illegitimate child. His father perished upon the guillotine in 1794, because, though a republican, he protested against the successes of the French revolution. After his death his widow took her two sons to Geneva to have them educated. There they received the strong and severe training of Protestant schools. In 1805 François went to Paris to study law. The life of the French capital, which was to some extent a liberal education in itself, and his reading of the works of Kant, Klópfstock, Herder, Schiller, and other great spirits of France and Germany, deepened and developed his mind in a most remarkable way. M. Stäpfer, the Swiss ambassador, having noticed his rare gifts, introduced him to the most serious society of the city. He became a contributor to *Le Publiciste*, in which he defended with vigor "*Les Martyrs*" of Chateaubriand and thereby won the friendship of the great author. In 1809 he published a book of synonyms, in 1811 one upon fine arts, and in 1812 he was appointed to the chair of modern history at the Sorbonne. He was then twenty-five.

Even at this time he had already impressed many by his



GUIZOT.

force of character. In his inaugural lecture he had refused to pay the usual compliments to Napoleon I., then in the height of his power. His ability as an original thinker and his executive ability were also recognized. Royer-



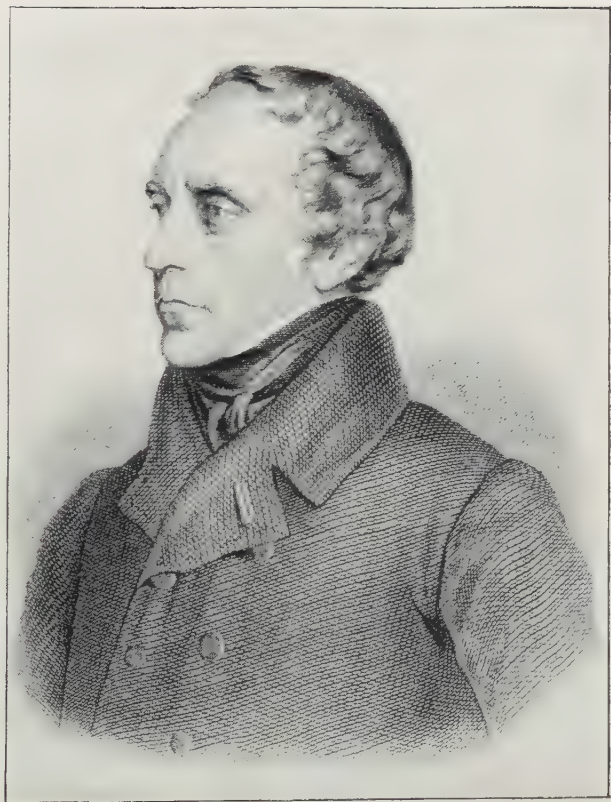
Collard recommended him for official service, and he was made secretary of the ministry of the interior. Upon the return of Napoleon I., during the hundred days, he was chosen by the liberal royalists of Paris to go to Ghent and convince Louis XVIII. of the necessity of accepting the most important changes made by the French revolution in France. Upon the return of Louis XVIII. to Paris he was made general secretary of the ministry of justice, and later on a member of the council of state. His fearless advocacy of a policy of moderation against the upholders of the ancient régime brought him into disfavor, and in 1820 he was dismissed from his position. He resumed his professorship, but the liberalism of his lectures caused their interdiction in 1822. Six years afterward he was restored to his position in the council of state and to his chair at the Sorbonne. At this time he delivered those lectures which have appeared in book form as studies of civilization. It was then that Guizot, Cousin, and Villemain, lecturing one upon history, one upon philosophy, and the other upon literature, made that remarkable triumvirate which is unique in the annals of any one institution, and excited an enthusiasm for higher things in France without precedent. In 1830 Guizot was elected member of parliament, made minister of the interior, and soon after minister of public instruction, a position which he filled until 1836. Whenever he retired from official life he returned at once to his books. His bibliography reveals the ups and downs of his stormy career—his “ups” for us were when he was writing. With his political elevation we can detect an inferior ideal of historical writing. To some extent at least his books become political instruments. In his historical studies he seeks lessons for the French democracy. In 1840 he became ambassador to London, where he studied directly the working of the free institutions of England,

which so far he had only approached by means of documents. At the end of the year he returned to France, ostensibly as minister of foreign affairs, but in reality as prime minister. As such he endeavored to be a leader, one with sound ideals, one with a government which should be the realization of practical reason, or rather practical reason itself. His political aims he defended before the parliament with an irresistible eloquence. He saw clearly the needs of France, the importance of a greater industrial development, of commercial extension, the acquisition of wealth—the creation of great interests tending to give stability to the social organism. He always sought to establish the political preponderance of the middle class as the one best qualified to sustain a strong and well-ordered government. He dreaded no calamity more than the overthrow of political institutions. “The revolutionary spirit,” he says, “if fatal to the great things that it builds as well as to those that it overthrows.” He had a profound aversion for national adventures, wars, and their evils. To him, more than to any other man, was due the preservation of peace in Europe while he was in power. His aims were sound, but he erred in method by the use of unscrupulous politicians, by not keeping in touch with the masses, and by his unwillingness to make timely concessions. At last, in 1848, he had to flee to England for his life. In 1849 he returned to his native land and to his country home at Val-Richer. Thenceforth, having ended his political career, his activities outside of his retreat were divided between the French Academy, to which he had been elected in 1836, and the Reformed Church of France, of which he was a devout and devoted member. He rendered great services to the Protestant societies of evangelization and education. His speeches in the French Academy assumed the importance of great events. Still, in his quiet home, the

historian was doing prodigies of work. His efforts centered upon the history of England, that of France, his memoirs, great historical characters, and upon religion, though he wrote also upon art and literature. He died in 1874.

In 1812 Guizot had married Mademoiselle de Meulan, a very superior literary woman, already widely known. She died in 1827, having been a true intellectual helpmate. In 1827 he married again, but his wife died in 1833. He lost a most promising son on the threshold of active manhood, and his mother, during his exile to England. This self-made man, upon whom fortune seemed to have bestowed her favors, had a life of great trials, which he bore in a most heroic way. In his religious beliefs, as well as in his studies of history, he had found the basis of an optimism which never faltered even under the most trying circumstances. His philosophy of life was one of moderation. In all things he shunned extremes. Truth for him was the mean between extreme opinions. In philosophy he was an eclectic—that is, equally distant from materialism and idealism. He favored liberal Catholicism and conservative Protestantism as midway between ultramontaniam and rationalism. Much hated, much maligned, he showed his perfect indifference to public opinion by never heeding it. Everyone recognized his honesty. Having for years had the finances of the nation under his control, and notwithstanding his great literary activity, he died a poor man. Strong in his friendships as in his aversions, often mistaken as a political leader, unfaltering in religious loyalty, Guizot was a rare man, a great orator and a great historian.

The great importance of Guizot's career, from the point of view of French letters, lies in the impetus which he gave to education, and above all to historical studies. He established in the ministry of public instruction an histori-



FRANÇOIS PIERRE GUILLAUME GUIZOT



cal commission to help any form of historical research, and to publish records, a commission to which we owe a large collection of historical documents. He also created a commission for the classification and preservation of historical monuments, and founded the French Historical Society, which has published nearly two hundred volumes of documents. He called forth an enthusiasm for learned historical investigation among the erudites, and did no little to popularize historical interest among the people. He was really the first one in France who treated history in the true scientific spirit, making it the study of cause and effect in the development of institutions and in the unfolding of human experience. His work upon the history of civilization, represented by his "*Essays Upon the History of France*," "*History of Civilization in Europe*," and "*History of Civilization in France*," was his best work, his most independent work, done in the truest scientific spirit and with a perfectly objective purpose. Never before had the principal elements of civilization been pointed out in such a lucid manner, the historical sequence so subjected to laws, or more captivating philosophical formulas devised to represent them. Though in the details of his work there was no new thing, there was something new in the whole, a new method of studying the advancing march of civilization. Though his works contained hasty generalizations, he was the foremost inductive inquirer of France in this field. He was sincere when he said: "The history of humanity has for me blanks—large blanks—but no mysteries." His later works of political philosophy and of history were weakened by the ends which they served—those of a political man. Still, he did not touch a great principle of history, a great period, or a great man, without throwing out rich and suggestive ideas all along. The moral tone of his utterances is healthy. In all matters ex-

cept politics Guizot was a consistent puritan. This is seen in his indifference to externals. His prose has no coloring. "He was sometimes the burin," says Sainte-Beuve, "but never the brush." There is no artistic preoccupation in his pages, though he wrote admirably upon art. He also touched literature, though he was not a literary man in the ordinary sense of the term. His great power on the rostrum was not derived from the artifices of oratory, but from his nobleness of purpose, and his sincerity. His achievements he performed in the face of prejudice, of systematic opposition, and sectarian hatred. The day of adequate recognition may yet be distant, but it will come. Frenchmen will praise in him the orator, the historian, the political man, the citizen, but above all, the man.

JEAN CHARLEMAGNE BRACQ.

Vassar College.

## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

The aversion of the classicists for barbarous times, and everything not in touch with the polished refinement of their own civilization, retarded the development of historical studies until the dawn of our century. To be fruitful, this renaissance must first unravel the story of our origin. Bolder and less finical than their predecessors, also further enlightened by the great changes just witnessed, our historians are discovering the traditions of those confused epochs so far thought to be shrouded in impenetrable darkness or repellent barbarism. Thus the philosophical school of our day gives us a new conception of history, more liberal because less bound by systems, more solid because based upon the profound study of documents, more lucid because an-



cient revolutions are judged by the light of recent experience.

Guizot, the leader of this school, shares with Augustin Thierry the honor of having renovated historical studies. One is a painter of historical pictures; the other is a thinker and a politician. Guizot first seeks a principle to guide him through the immense labyrinth of facts. He wishes to sift the civilization of France and Europe down to its constituent elements, the progress of which he can follow throughout the ages. There are four of these elements—the church, royalty, the nobility, and commonalty. To these four primitive factors he refers all the infinite varieties of historical phenomena. They account for everything. From their association and respective conflicts our history is derived. Progress consists in their continuous, we may say fatal, evolution. The best régime is, therefore, that which succeeds in preserving their equilibrium.

Guizot views history from the pinnacle of his reason. He watches unroll before him that harmonious order in which irregularities of detail and apparent discords disappear. He does not consider facts in themselves in their transient relations, but as the expression of constant laws which can alone interpret them. He relates them to ideas, and seizes their import and exact systematical relations. From this tangled network he builds a solid tissue of deductions. He regulates disorder, and disciplines the wild confusion of events which eventually follow the course which he designs for them. Neither chance, the unforeseen, nor man's caprice, alters the fundamental lines verified by the historian's infallible accuracy and profound analysis.—PELLISSIER.

## II.

As a historian Guizot is noted for his philosophic grasp of important historical development, and his insight into the relations of cause and effect. Paying little heed to amusing and dramatic details or personal ex-

plots, he tries to determine the dominant ideas or principles of each period of history. All his works are marked by a seriousness of purpose which often assumes the form of ardent patriotism or earnest religious conviction. He believed that the study of the past has an ethical value, that an accurate knowledge of the past helps us to comprehend the present and to provide for the future.—CHARLES GROSS.

### III.

Adolphe Thiers was engaged at the same time as Mignet, his life-long friend, upon a history of the French revolution. The same liberal principles were held in common by the young authors. Their methods differed widely. Mignet's orderly and compact narration was luminous through its skillful arrangement; Thiers's "*Histoire*" was copious, facile, brilliant, more just in its general conception than exact in statement, a plea for revolutionary patriotism as against the royalist reaction of the day, and not without influence in preparing the spirit of the country for the approaching revolution of July. His "*History of the Consulate and the Empire*" is the great achievement of Thiers's maturity; journalist, orator, minister of state until he became the chief of stricken France in 1871, his highest claim to be remembered was this vast record of his country's glory. He had an appetite for facts; no detail—the price of bread, of soap, of candles—was a matter of indifference to him; he could not show too many things, or show them too clearly; his supreme quality was intelligence; his passion was the pride of patriotism; his foible was the vanity of military success, the zeal of a Chauvinist. He was a liberal; but Napoleon summed up France, and won her battles, therefore Napoleon, the great captain, who "made war with his genius and politics with his passions," must be forever magnified. The campaigns and battle places of Thiers are unsurpassed in their kind. His style in narrative is facile, abundant, animated, and so transpar-

ent that nothing seems to intervene between the object and the reader who has become a spectator; a style negligent at times, and even incorrect, adding no charm of its own to a lucid presentation of things.—DOWDEN,

#### IV.

The philosophical historians have been divided according to their different theories, but the most eminent of them are those whom Chateaubriand calls fatalists; men who, having surveyed the course of public events, have come to the conclusion that individual character has had little influence on the political destinies of mankind, that there is a general and inevitable series of events which regularly succeed each other with the certainty of cause and effect, and that it is as easy to trace it as it is impossible to resist or divert it from its course. A tendency to these views is visible in almost every French historian and philosopher of the present time. The philosophy of history thus grounded has, in their hands, assumed the aspect of a science.—BOTTA.

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM MICHELET.

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THE BASTILLE.

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*From "An Historical View of the French Revolution." \**

The illustrious Quesnay, physician to Louis XV. and to Madame de Pompadour, who lived in the house of the latter at Versailles, saw the king one day rush in suddenly, and was alarmed. Madame du Hausset, the witty *femme de chambre*, who has left such curious memoirs, inquired of him why he seemed so uneasy. "Madame," returned he, "whenever I see the king, I say to myself: 'There is a man who can cut my head off.'" "Oh!" said she, "the king is *too good*!"

The lady's maid thus summed up, in one word, the guaranties of the monarchy.

The king was too good to cut a man's head off; that was no longer agreeable to custom. But he could, with one word, send him to the Bastille, and there *forget* him.

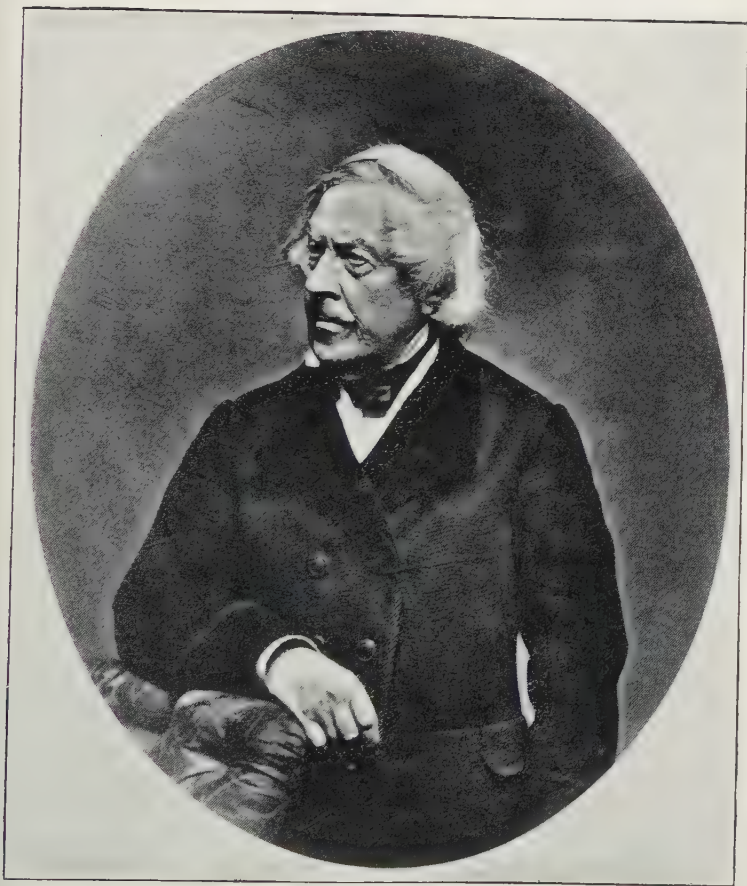
It remains to be decided which is best—to perish by one blow, or to suffer a lingering death for thirty or forty years.

There were some twenty Bastilles in France, of which six only (in 1775) contained three hundred prisoners. At Paris, in '79, there were about thirty prisons where people might be incarcerated without any sentence. An infinite number of convents were subsidiary to these Bastilles.

All these state-prisons, toward the close of the reign of Louis XIV., were, like everything else, controlled by the Jesuits. They were, in their hands, instruments of torture for the Protestants and the Jansenists—dens for conversion. A secrecy more pro-

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\* The selection is from section IX, part II, of the Introduction.



JULES MICHELET



found than that of the *leads* and the *wells* of Venice, the oblivion of the tomb, enshrouded everything. The Jesuits were the confessors of the Bastille, and of many other prisons; the prisoners who died were buried under false names in the church of the Jesuits. Every means of terror was in their hands, especially those dungeons whence the prisoners occasionally came out with their ears or noses gnawed away by the rats. Not only of terror, but of flattery also—both so potent with female prisoners. The almoner, to render grace more efficacious, employed even culinary arguments, starving, feeding, pampering the fair captive according as she resisted or yielded. More than one *staté* prison is mentioned in which the gaolers and the Jesuits paid alternate visits to the female prisoners, and had children by them. One preferred to strangle herself.

The lieutenant of police went, from time to time, to breakfast at the Bastille. That was reckoned as a visit—a magisterial supervision. That magistrate was ignorant of everything; and yet it was he alone who gave an account of the minister. One family, one dynasty, Châteauneuf, his son, La Vrillière, and his grandson, Saint-Florentin (who died in 1777), possessed, for a century, the department of the state prisons and the *lettres-de-cachet*. For this dynasty to subsist, it was necessary to have prisoners; when the Protestants were liberated, their places were filled up with the Jansenists; next, they took men of letters, philosophers, the Voltaires, Frèrets, Diderots. The minister used to give generously blank *lettres-de-cachet* to the intendants, the bishops, and people in the administration. Saint-Florentin, alone, gave away as many as 50,000. Never had man's dearest treasure, liberty, been more lavishly squandered. These letters were the object of a profitable traffic; they were sold to fathers who wanted to get rid of their sons, and given to pretty women who were inconvenienced by their husbands. This last cause of imprisonment was one of the most common.

And all through good nature. The king was too good to refuse a *lettre-de-cachet* to a great lord. The intendant was too good-natured not to grant one at a lady's request. The government clerks, the mistresses of the clerks, and the friends of these mistresses, through good nature, civility, or mere politeness, obtained, gave, or lent, those terrible orders by which a man was buried alive. Buried—for such was the carelessness and levity of those



amiable clerks—almost all nobles, fashionable men, all occupied with their pleasures—that they never had the time, when once the poor fellow was shut up, to think of his position.

Thus, the *government of grace*, with all its advantages—descending from the king to the lowest clerk in the administration—disposed, according to caprice or fancy of liberty of life.

Let us understand this system well. Why does such an one succeed? What does he possess, that everything should thrive with him? He has the grace of God and the king's good grace. Let him who is in disgrace, in this world of grace, go out of the world—banished, sentenced, and damned.

The Bastille, the *lettre-de-cachet*, is the king's excommunication.

Are the excommunicated to die? No. It would require a decision of the king, a resolution painful to take, which would grieve the king himself. It would be a judgment between him and his conscience. Let us save him the task of judging, of killing. There is a middle term between life and death: a lifeless, buried life. Let us organize a world expressly for oblivion. Let us set falsehood at the gates within and without, in order that life and death be ever uncertain. The living corpse no longer knew anything about his family. "But my wife?" "Thy wife is dead—I make a mistake—remarried." "Are any of my friends alive? Do they ever remember me?" "Thy friends, poor fool, why, they were the persons who betrayed thee." Thus the soul of the miserable prisoner, a prey to their ferocious merriment, is fed on derision, calumny, and lies.

Forgotten! O terrible word! That a soul should perish among souls! Had not he whom God created for life the right to live at least in the mind? What mortal shall dare inflict, even on the most guilty, this worst of deaths—to be eternally forgotten?

No, do not believe it. Nothing is forgotten—neither man nor thing.

## ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTION FROM TAINE.

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### ENGLISH MARRIAGES AND ENGLISH MARRIED WOMEN.

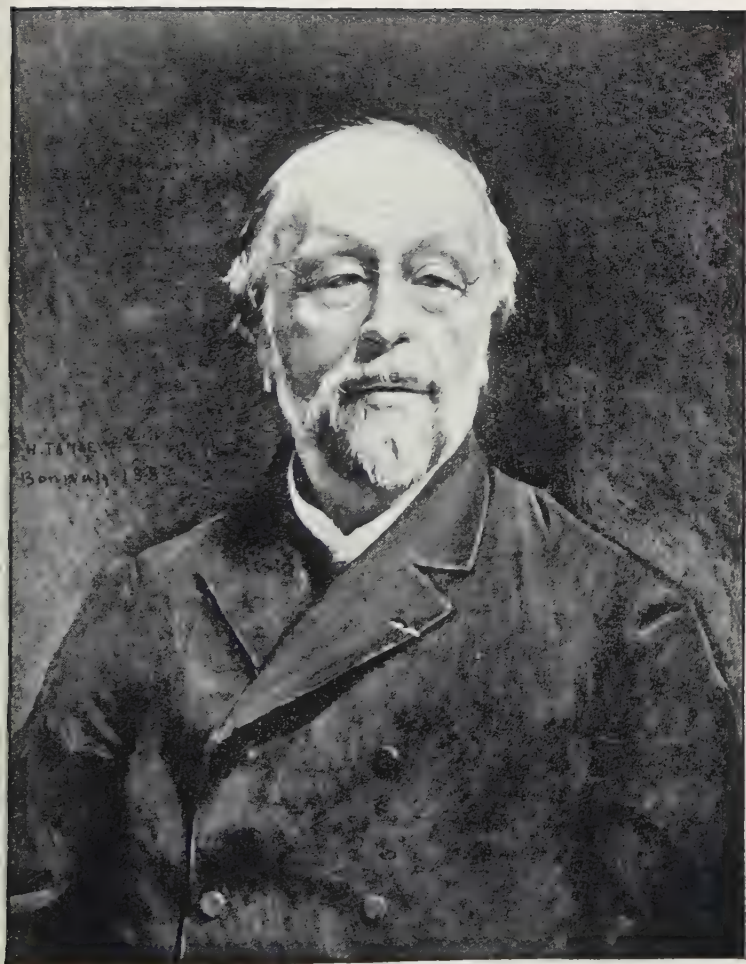
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*From "Notes on England."*

A young English girl will not marry unless through inclination; she weaves a romance for herself, and this dream forms part of her pride, of her chastity; thus many, and of exalted character, think they have fallen short should they marry without experiencing the enthusiasm suited to an absolute preference. To marry is to abandon oneself wholly and forever. Witness, with regard to this deep sentiment, the novels by ladies—above all, "*John Halifax, Gentleman*," and others by the same authoress. These are the theories of a pure, exclusive mind, which seems to have traversed the whole world without receiving, I will not say a stain, but the shadow of one.

In this romance of the heart, the young girl continues English—that is to say, positive and practical. She does not dream of outpourings, of sentimental walks, hand-in-hand in the moonlight, but of her share in an undertaking. She wishes to be the helper, the useful partner of her husband in his long journeys, in his difficult enterprises, in all his affairs, whether wearying or dangerous. Such, for example, were Mrs. Livingstone and Lady Baker; the one traversed Africa from side to side; the other went to the sources of the Nile, and narrowly escaped dying in consequence. I have seen an English Bishop of a large island, a country of beasts and cannibals; his poor wife carried on her countenance the marks of that terrible climate. A young girl of the neighborhood, rich and of good family, is

at this moment making her preparations, packing up her piano, etc.; the gentleman she is about to marry will take her to Australia; she will return once only in five or six years to kiss her old parents. . . . Very often a lady, daughter of a marquis or baronet, having a dowry of £3,000 or £3,250, marries a simple gentleman, and descends of her own free will from a state of fortune, of comfort, of society, into a lower or much inferior grade. She accustoms herself to this. The reverse of the medal is the fishery for husbands. Worldly and vulgar characters do not fail in this respect; certain young girls use and abuse their freedom in order to settle themselves well. A young man, rich and noble, is much run after. Being too well received, flattered, tempted, provoked, he becomes suspicious and remains on his guard. This is not the case in France; the young girls are too closely watched to make the first advance; there the game never becomes the sportsman. Commonly, the dowries are very small. I have been told of several families in which the eldest son has one or two hundred thousand pounds sterling; the daughters receive from three to five thousand. However, in order to marry, it is necessary that they should feel a passion. Many do not marry in consequence of a thwarted inclination, and continue to live with their eldest brother. Every Englishman has a bit of romance in his heart with regard to marriage; he pictures a home with the wife of his choice, domestic talk, children; there his little universe is inclosed, all his own; so long as he does not have it he is dissatisfied; being in this matter the reverse of a Frenchman, to whom marriage is generally an end, a makeshift. Frequently he is obliged to wait, especially if a younger son, because he has not sufficient as yet wherewith to maintain his wife. He goes to India, to Australia, labors with all his might, returns, and marries; here the passions are tenacious and deep. When an Englishman is in love, one of my entertainers said to me, he is capable of anything. Thackeray has very well marked the intensity and the persistence of this sentiment in his portrait of Major Dobbin, the lover of Amelia, in "*Vanity Fair*"; he waits fifteen years without hope, because for him there is but one woman in the world. This causes silent rendings of the heart and long inner tragedies. Numbers of young men experience it; and the protracted chastity, the habits of taciturn concentration, a capacity



HIPPOLYTE ADOLPHE TAINÉ

*After the Painting by Bonnat*



for emotion greater and less scattered than among us, carries their passions to the extreme. Frequently it ends in nothing, because they are not beloved, or because the disparity of rank is too great, or because they have not money enough wherewith to maintain a family—a very costly thing here. Then they become half insane; travel to distract their minds, proceed to the ends of the earth. One who was mentioned to me, very distinguished, was supplanted by a titled rival; during two years apprehensions were felt for his reason. He went to China and to Australia; at present he occupies a high post, he has been made a baronet, he presides over important business, but he is unmarried; from time to time he steals off, makes a journey on foot, in order to be alone and not have any one to converse with.

I have previously noted that young people see and associate together in perfect freedom, without being watched; they can thus study and understand each other as much as they please; for four months, for five months, and more, they ride on horseback and chat together during several successive seasons in the country. When the young man has made up his mind it is to the young girl that he addresses himself first, asking the consent of the parents in the second place; this is the opposite of the French custom, where the man would consider it indelicate to utter a single clear or vague phrase to the young girl before having spoken to her parents. In this matter the English find fault with us, ridicule our marriages summarily settled before a lawyer. Yet C——, who is English, and knows France well, allows that their love-matches end more than once in discord, and our marriages of arrangement in concord. . . .

In England, marriage is encompassed with profound respect, and as regards this matter opinion is unbending; it is quite sufficient to read books, newspapers, especially the writings in which anonymous authors indulge in the greatest license, for example, romances, comic journals; adultery is never excused; even in the latitude of intimate conversations between man and man it is always held up as a crime. Breaches occur . . . among the class of tradesmen, and in the lower order of the nobility, which is fashionable, travels, and copies Continental manners. But, in the mass of the nation among well-brought-up persons in the great world, the wives are almost always faithful. C——



tells me that I might remain here for eighteen months, and visit all the drawing-rooms, without meeting an exception; one only is cited among the highest class. More such cases occurred fifty years ago, in the time of Byron and Alfieri; since then, opinion has become severe, and the Queen has labored with all her might in this direction; firstly, by her example; secondly, by her influence. She excludes ladies of doubtful reputation from her Court; the extreme urgency and pressure of affairs were needed during the Crimean war for her to tolerate under the same roof with her, at Windsor, a statesman known as a profligate. Another guaranty is the dread of publicity and of the newspapers. On this head our free and rakish manners grievously offend them. C—— related to me that in a Parisian circle he heard a man of the world observe to another: "Is it true, then, that your wife has got a lover?" This remark he considers monstrous, and he is right. A book like Balzac's "*Physiologie du Mariage*" would give great offense; perhaps the author would be prosecuted by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, and probably it would not have been accepted by any publisher. As regards our ordinary novels, a liberal review, the *National*, could not find a strong enough expression wherewith to designate them—"nameless ignominy, the morality of stock-jobbers and lorettes." They forget three things. In the first place, these irregularities are not habitual among us, excepting in the case of fashionable upstarts; they very rarely reach the rich or well-to-do middle-class which possesses family traditions. Besides, in the provinces, life goes on openly, and scandal-mongering, which is greatly feared, performs the part of the police. Finally, the Frenchman flaunts that which a foreigner conceals; he has a horror of hypocrisy, and he prefers to be a braggart of vice. According to my friends, the good conduct of English ladies is explainable by the following causes: 1. They are more habituated to take care of themselves, having been free from their infancy. 2. They are less accessible to illusion, to enthusiastic dreams, because they have mixed with young men, and had some experience of the world. 3. They have habits of reflection, and a fund of good sense, because they have received a more serious education, having learned several languages, gained a smattering of science, traveled nearly always in England, and often abroad, and heard their father dis-



cuss politics and grave subjects with his friends. Besides, Protestantism develops habits of reflection and reasoning. Lastly, the novels are always moral; and in contact with the poor, in charitable societies, they have gathered some knowledge of real life. 4. They live for eight or nine months of the year in the country, and are there sheltered against temptation. 5. They have many children, who occupy their time; a full nursery, with its train of nurses and governesses, requires continual supervision. 6. They give themselves all manner of occupations in addition—Sunday-schools, country sewing-classes, visits to the poor, botany, mineralogy, collections of plants and of butterflies, reading. Every family in easy circumstances, when in the country, receives in addition to the *Times*, in addition to other journals and very solid reviews, numbers of new books, sent from the circulating library. Mudie's, which is the principal one, purchases one hundred and fifty thousand volumes yearly; it took three thousand copies of Livingstone's "*Travels in Africa*"; two thousand five hundred of Macaulay's "*History of England*." A quantity of serious books arrive in this way, and are renewed monthly on the library table in country seats. Among these books the most common are works of political economy, natural history, history, and, above all, travels. Each year scores of them are published. Next to the pleasure of traveling, the greatest pleasure for an Englishman is to read a volume of travel; in this way he augments his store of facts. The ladies have the same taste; all those with whom I am acquainted have visited France, Italy, Germany. A young wife with whom I dined yesterday will pass the winter in Rome, the spring in Jerusalem; those who have delicate chests go to Cairo as readily as we go to Nice. During the journey they take notes, keep a journal; on their return, some of these are printed, others are communicated to their friends in manuscript. They thus keep the globe perpetually at their finger-ends; and I have seen those who, with a knowledge of the subject, interested themselves in the settlements of Australia, the oil springs of Pennsylvania, the revolt of the Taepings in China, and the annual massacres of Dahomey. Add, lastly, the great amount of physical movement and the talents which are cultivated; there are always one or two painters in water-color in a family, and every one rides on horseback once a day. By these occupations

the mind is engaged, the time is filled, and that closes the door against unhealthy ideas. These are the auxiliaries of the moral principle; but the principle itself must also be taken to account. In France it is based on the sentiment of honor; in England on the idea of duty. Now, the former is rather arbitrary; its reach varies in different persons. One piques himself on being rigid on a certain point, and thinks himself free on all the rest; in the circle of bad actions, he cuts off a segment from which he excludes himself; but this part varies according to his preferences—for example, he will be truthful in speaking, but not in writing, or the reverse. My honor consists of that wherein I place my glory, and I can place it in this as well as in that. On the contrary, the idea of duty is strict, and does not admit of the slightest compromise. The Englishwoman knows that in marrying she has vowed fidelity, and the remembrance of this remains anchored in her conscience. According to my friends, this anchorage is so strong that frequently after a slip the wife breaks off altogether; all her past flows back upon her like a flood, till she is well-nigh choked with shame and sorrow. Besides, she has not the elasticity of mind, the manual dexterity, necessary for harmoniously conducting an intrigue and a household: ambiguity is repugnant to her decided character; division revolts her; the obligation to lie unceasingly is insupportable to her. She insists upon being carried off in order to bring about a divorce.

### XXX. MINOR WRITERS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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It remains now to present to the reader some of those writers who have helped to win renown for French literature in the nineteenth century, although they have not held positions of the highest rank. The rank of many of these, however, although not the highest, is yet sufficiently high to entitle them to most honorable mention in any account of French literature, however brief.

The nineteenth century in French literature has been decidedly an age of fiction. Its greatest names, especially in the realm of imaginative literature, Hugo, Balzac, Dumas, George Sand, Sainte-Beuve, Flaubert, Maupassant, Daudet, and Zola, have all been those of story writers, although, of course, Sainte-Beuve found his true fame as a critic of imaginative literature rather than as an original writer.

The achievement of the century in poetry, however, is not inconsiderable. Besides Hugo, who, taking everything into account, is undoubtedly France's greatest poet, there were De Vigny, De Musset, and Gautier, all poets of high rank and of great influence upon the intellectual development of their time. These, however, have already been considered in connection with their fiction, which on the whole was more remarkable than their poetry.

One poet, however, we have not mentioned in any way, and yet in popularity with the people, and in popularity



PIERRE JEAN DE BÉRANGER.

also outside of his own country, he is the greatest poet France has ever had. BÉRANGER (1780-1857) belongs to no school, and yet he formed a sort of connecting link between the classicists and the romanticists. His songs were never favorites of those in the higher ranks of life. He was always getting into trouble with "the powers that be," both political and religious, but he struck chords that the popular heart responded to although he was not a poet of either deep thought or deep feeling. Béranger has been called the "Burns of France." The name, however, is not wholly applicable. Burns was essentially a poet of personal passion, whereas Béranger's forte seemed to be the giving expression to what may be called the lyrical feelings of others. But, though he framed his compositions in strict accordance with the conventions of the classic age, Béranger, like Burns, was a perfect master of his art, and his songs literally sang themselves into popularity.

LECONTE DE LISLE (b. 1818), the poet of the naturalists, has already been noticed. Contemporary with him was one whose influence upon not only the French poetry of his day, but also the English poetry of his day, was remarkable. Théodore de Banville (b. 1820) has the distinction of having revived and made popular those forms of verse so well known nowadays in "*vers de société*"—ballads, rondeaus, triolets, etc.—that were popular in mediæval times, but since had been neglected.

The historians of the century we have considered. Connected with the historians, inasmuch as their subject lies outside of the field of belles lettres, are the philosophers. The great name in philosophy in France in the century is that of Comte. AUGUSTE COMTE (1796-1851) indeed has proved to be one of the most remarkable men of his age, not only in France, but in the world, and it certainly would be absurd to put his name down as that of a "minor

writer " in French literature except for the reason that philosophy as he treated it was scarcely literature at all, but rather science. Comte's " positive philosophy," as it is called, has exercised the profoundest influence on men of thought ever since its author first promulgated it, while the practical deductions he derived from it as to conduct, education, the cultivation of character, etc., have had scarcely less consideration.

A contemporary of Comte's, VICTOR COUSIN (1792-1868) was also a philosopher of great note and influence. But Cousin's philosophy was eclectic rather than original, and, being founded on no more solid basis than his own opinion, it has not retained its hold upon the thought of mankind.

ERNEST RENAN (1823-1892) may also be classed as a philosopher. But Renan's philosophy was not constructive, and by the world in general he is held to be a critic rather than a philosopher, and rightfully so. Possessing a style perhaps the clearest and most fascinating that has ever been devoted to serious subjects in France, Renan exercised great influence in the field of investigation. His name is most familiarly associated with that of the history of religion, especially of the Christian religion. But he is an example of one whose erudition and philosophy, gained at the expense of years of labor and meditation, only sufficed to take away from him what serious views of life he once may have had, what explanation of life he once may have had glimpses of. In the end he became a mere dilettante who played with serious things and had no opinion of his own to offer of any sort. His conclusions, he said at last, were only such " as a street arand arrives at off-hand."

Returning to the field of imaginative prose literature, the field in which French genius in this century has won most





JOSEPH EARNEST RENAN





renown, and passing over De Vigny, De Musset, Mérimée and Gautier, also the Goncourts, the founders of the



ERNEST RENAN.

school of the naturalists, we shall still find many conspicuous names.

The first to be mentioned is HENRI BEYLE (1783-1842), who wrote under the name of DE STENDHAL. The pecu-

liarity of Beyle's importance lies in the fact that he was a forerunner or antecessor both of the romanticists, on the one hand, and of the realists and the naturalists, on the other. To romanticism he gave by precept and illustration three principles: (1) That energy, action, achievement are the things to glorify in art, a principle, that Hugo and Dumas acted upon with such consummate success. (2) That the representation of character is the essential object of art, a principle that was so fully adopted by Balzac and George Sand. (3) That the "cultivation of individuality" is the law of development for the artist, a principle, indeed, that was the vital element of the romanticists' distinctive theory. But Beyle is even more remarkable for what he achieved in harmony with the ideals and methods of naturalism. In his "*The Chartreuse of Parma*," a novel written as early as 1830, he exemplifies the minute analysis, the attention to precise and "documentary" details, that afterward became so conspicuous in the work of Balzac, Flaubert, and the Goncourts. It is curious to notice what Beyle himself said of this book: "It is written in the style of the civil code. I fancy it may meet with some success toward 1880."

Roughly speaking, novels may be divided into novels of incident and novels of character. Among the great names of French fiction Hugo and Dumas, of course, were the exemplars of the first of these kinds of novels; Balzac and George Sand of the second. But many other writers won success in one kind or the other.

Of the minor writers of the first kind of novels EUGÈNE SUE (1804-1854) deserves the first mention. Eugène Sue, the "French Cooper," as he has sometimes been called, although the name is not appropriate as applied to most of his work, was in his day the great rival of Dumas in popu-



EDMOND FRANÇOIS VALENTIN ABOUT





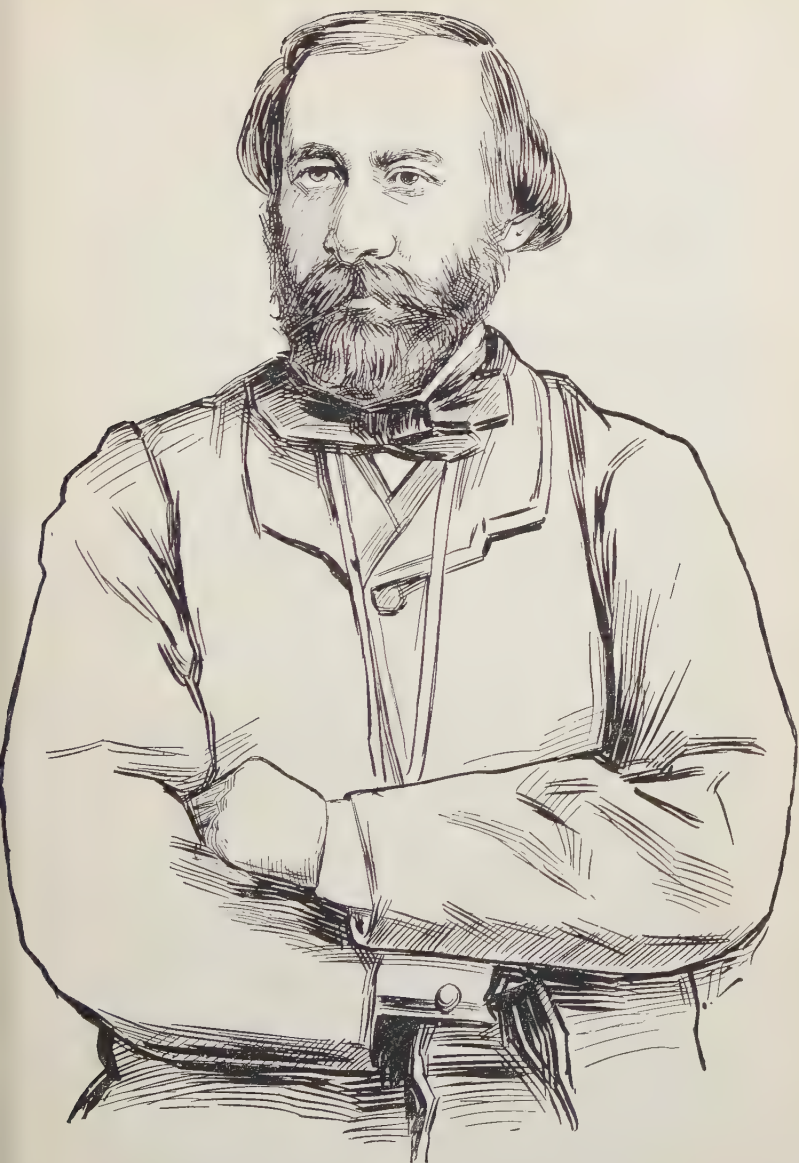
EUGÈNE SUE.

larity. He called himself "the novelist of the people," and so great was his power of production and his influence that the government sought to control, or, at least, to regulate, his activity, for it was thought he was trying to influence the people politically. His novels were called "socialistic novels." Their principal influence, however, was to prepare the way for the reception of the really "socialistic" novels, or rather, the "social" novels of a greater genius. It may well be believed that part of the extraordinary success that Hugo's "*Les Misérables*" and "*The Toilers of the Sea*" achieved was due to the preparatory work of Sue. Sue nowadays is chiefly remembered for his "*Mysteries of Paris*" (1842) and "*The Wandering Jew*" (1845). He had too many defects to be a really great writer. Among these were his prolixity, his lack of vivacity, his lack of dramatic intensity, and his lack of charm and style as a writer. But some of his characters were creations of great power and are of enduring vitality.

The two writers of novels of incident next to be mentioned have won considerable reputation outside of France. ERCKMANN AND CHATRIAN (Erckmann, 1822-1899; Chatrian, 1826-1890), though romanticists in their original ideal of art, were yet realists, and almost naturalists in the execution of their art. Their subjects were generally taken from the revolutionary and Napoleonic period—a period whose essential characteristics they portrayed with great, if uninspiring, fidelity. Their best-known works—they wrote conjointly—are "*Madame Thérèse*" (1863) and "*The Conscript of 1813*" (1864).

The last writer of this class that we shall mention is ÉMILE GABORIAU (1835-1874), the introducer into France if not the inventor there, of the so-called "detective novel." But it is only for his merit in this one phase of art that Gaboriau deserves mention. Neither as an artist in words





OCTAVE FEUILLET.

nor as a portrayer of character has he any merit whatever. But his popularity for his own genre was considerable.

Coming now to the writers of "novels of character," the first one that claims notice is JULES SANDEAU (1811-1883), George Sand's early collaborator, whose name, indeed (a pen name), "Sand," is an abbreviation of his. Though not a writer of great power, Sandeau is nevertheless a popular writer, especially with women. His tone is pure; his sentiment, though refined, is effective; and his stories are exceedingly well constructed.

The next "novelist of character" to be mentioned, OCTAVE FEUILLET (1821-1890), was a writer of much greater power and fame, and, indeed, so far as popularity went in the period of his greatest activity—that of the second empire—he was one of the most successful writers of his time. Feuillet was in his way a romanticist, with an eye for fine effects, and he delighted in depicting the life and manners of men and women of rank and fashion. In his method of art, too, he was an idealist. He did not concern himself with the ordinary duties and obligations of life. Toward the end of his career he saw that his style of art was getting somewhat out of vogue, and he sadly said: "Realism no longer cares for my ideal." But if Feuillet's sentimentalism was perhaps a little weak and sickly, his ethical quality, though it might have been more bracing, was at least on the side of sound morality.

A very different personage in every way, both in his life and in his art, and in the success he made of his life and his art, was HENRY MURGER (1822-1861). Murger now is principally remembered for his "*Life in Bohemia*," an account at once pathetic and humorous, at once true to fact and yet comical and burlesquing, of that peculiar life (denoted by the name of the book), once so characteristic of Paris. It is to this book of Murger's that the words

"bohemia" and "bohemian" as terms of social significance owe their origin.

VICTOR CHERBULIEZ (b. 1832) again is an "old-fashioned" writer, a romanticist. That is to say, he is a storyteller rather than an analyzer, a portrayer of extravagant and often improbable incident and a weaver of plots, rather than a describer of character and action as influenced by the exigencies of everyday life. One of the best things about Cherbuliez is his style, which is clear, direct, felicitous, and even witty. Cherbuliez is indeed, both for matter and manner, one of the most readable of all French authors.

Of GEORGES OHNET (b. 1848) it must be said that his reputation is unique. Though disregarded by the critics, and even condemned, or at least pooh-poohed, by them, he has proved himself to be one of the most popular writers of his generation. His work is wholly conventional and commonplace, and even his style is without any merit of any sort. Yet, notwithstanding, he presents his incidents and his characters in such a melodramatic sort of way that he catches readers by the tens of thousands, even by the hundreds of thousands. Readers, however, it is said, who are unprepared by education or experience to wish for anything more refined or intrinsically more interesting than what he is able to give them.

We have reserved till the last a name greater than any save the greatest. The reputation of ALEXANDRE DUMAS, the younger (1824-1895), is founded mainly on his work as a dramatist—work to which he devoted himself, especially in the later years of his life, with great seriousness and earnestness of purpose. In his view the stage should be a school of character and morals. But when Dumas was a young man he won great fame because of his novels. These works, written without any conscious

ideal of art, the mere relation of his almost boyish experiences and views of life, have won, perhaps for that very reason, a permanency of reputation that the more pretentious work of greater authors has often failed to attain. His most noted novel is "*The Lady with the Camellias*," produced in 1848. But it is with the dramatized version of this famous story, first produced in 1852, that the world is most familiar.

## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

For forty years, from 1815 to his death, Béranger was perhaps the most popular writer of his time, and he was ranked among the greatest French poets. There has been a reaction against that enthusiasm, and he is now severely judged by the critics. They say that he lacked inspiration, and was vulgar, bombastic, and grandiloquent. Little attention is paid to him, therefore, in general histories of French literature. But if he is not entitled to stand on the high pedestal given to him by his contemporaries, we yet can not deny genius to the man who for more than a generation swayed the hearts of the people at his will and exerted on his countrymen and on his epoch an immense influence.—ALCÉE FORTIER.

### II.

The celebrity which Béranger enjoyed during life was in great part due to circumstances, to his skill in profiting by them, and perhaps also to the contrast between an humble fiddler and the great romantic chorus leaders. His merits of style and composition, which will always insure him an eminent place in the literary history of our times, must not therefore be overlooked.



ALEXANDRE DUMAS (*Fils*)



Béranger is both a popular and a scholarly poet. He is popular in his choice of subjects, in the malicious, caviling spirit that inspires his songs, and in his Gallic humor, through which here and there pierce stray gleams of sentiment; he is so also in his narrowly jealous patriotism, his intolerant, suspicious "liberalism," his leaning toward democratic equality, and the socialistic, humanitarian aspirations, of which he finally became the willing interpreter.—PELLISSIER.

## III.

Among the foremost of the French dealers in forbidden fruit, canned for export and domestic use, is M. Octave Feuillet, whose wares are well known to the American public. His novels are the fine flower of the Byzantine literature of the second empire. They have been freely translated and widely read in this country.

To the French public, thus familiar with the most high-flown and the least lawful passion, M. Feuillet gave a new thing—he offered it the old and ever-welcome exhibition of amorous adventure, dexterously veiled by a pretense of morality. French morality is at times rather humorsome, and in one of its freaks it chose to accept M. Feuillet's pseudo-delicacy and ultra-refinement and to close its eyes to the falsity of M. Feuillet's ethics. The public was tired of the stormy souls in irregular situations seen in the stories of Hugo, Dumas, George Sand, Mérimée, and Musset, and it was ready for a novelty. M. Feuillet took Musset for his model, turning his morality inside out. Musset's morality was easy, to say the least, and M. Feuillet's was pretentiously paraded; his tender and glowing interiors were certified to contain only a duly married couple.—BRANDER MATTHEWS.

## IV.

Feuillet's novels are all dramas, with well-constructed plots and striking scenes. It may be that a novel should



make us think and give us food for reflection, but it need not be primarily an instructive work, and it should not be a work of science. Thus all pedantic display should be carefully eliminated. There is pedantry in the prolixity and minuteness of analysis of our psychological novelists; they smell of the lamp and suggest the instructor in mental philosophy. There is a persistency in the enumeration of our descriptive novelists, and in the display of documents by our scientific novelists, which is in the worst possible taste. Feuillet spares us the tedium of these long preliminaries; he gives us only the results of his analysis, and his descriptions are confined to a few lines, but he describes with a sure touch, he defines with the exact words; his language is always clear, his style swift and supple. His choice of rare natures, whom he shows to us under the influence of exceptional sentiments and in the midst of startling events, is doubtless totally opposed to the method of the realists. We may prefer one system or the other, that does not matter; an author is responsible to us, not for the system he chooses, but for the use he makes of it.—  
RENÉ DOUMIC.

## V.

Renan came naturally by his vocation for the ideal. In his mind man is great only on account of his moral and intellectual faculties, which, in raising him above the vulgarities of life, open before him a world of purer pleasures and higher intuitions. He calls religion that part which the ideal plays in human existence. He has always professed this religion, and has always considered himself its priest. Having early and irrevocably lost from faith all that could be dissipated by intellectual analysis, he retained what the love and need of an ideal make indispensable to pious souls. No one has possessed to a greater degree the "sense of divinity." But what does this mean to him? We can not look to him for a definition of the infinite, yet he nevertheless seems to have always recognized a celestial principle, a supreme conscience, as it were, in the vagueness implied by

the infinite. In rejecting the supernatural he remains none the less in touch with the divine. With the loss of all positive faith he becomes mystical.—PELLISSIER.

## VI.

The publication of Renan's "*Correspondence*" has revealed to us another influence that affected the formation of his character—the most powerful perhaps of all; it was that of his sister Henriette. The girl, poor and highly cultivated, who conducted far from her family, in Poland or Russia, the education of the children of a great lady, was gnawed by resentment; and in her triple rôle of woman, hired teacher, and native of Brittany, suffered cruelly from being unable to satisfy it or even to relieve it by giving it expression. It was through her brother that she found her opportunity. As soon as the first doubts began to show themselves in the seminarist, it was his sister who encouraged them; or, rather, she communicated to him her own boldness of spirit; and, putting her savings to the service of her passion, it was she who supplied Ernest Renan with the means of quitting St. Sulpice and of resuming thus the life of a layman. We are able to-day to affirm that Henriette Renan was the great worker of her brother's unbelief; she was the patient worker, the impassioned worker, and only later did exegesis or philology furnish Renan with the reasons he needed for establishing the convictions his sister had breathed into him. It is right to add that both were utterly sincere, and that for Ernest Renan the sacrifice was painful. He was born to be a priest, as he himself has said, and his life was to be, if one may use the expression, that of a priest of science. With that suppleness of mind which was one day to characterize him, and procure him the means of being more at ease in the midst of contradictions than are many believers in the fortress of their dogmatism, he would have found without doubt the art of reconciling his studious tastes with the practice and observances of a dead faith.—BRUNETIÈRE.

## XXXI. THE MODERN FRENCH DRAMA.

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The drama in France in the nineteenth century has been the scene of conflict between romanticism and classicism quite the same as other departments of imaginative literature, and also the scene of that reaction against romanticism, which resulted in realism, naturalism, etc. Indeed



THE THEATER OF MOLIERE.

the greatest battles between romanticism and classicism have been fought in the drama.

The "romantic drama," as it is called, is most characteristically represented by the plays of Hugo, Dumas the elder, and De Vigny. Its essen-

tial principles, as defined by those who brought it into being, were the denying the validity of all "rules," and the claiming a liberty to disregard in the construction of plays the long-honored "three unities"—"time," "place," and "action." These principles, put into practice, became what may be called its principal external characteristics. Its principal internal characteristics, as exemplified in actual production, were the glorification

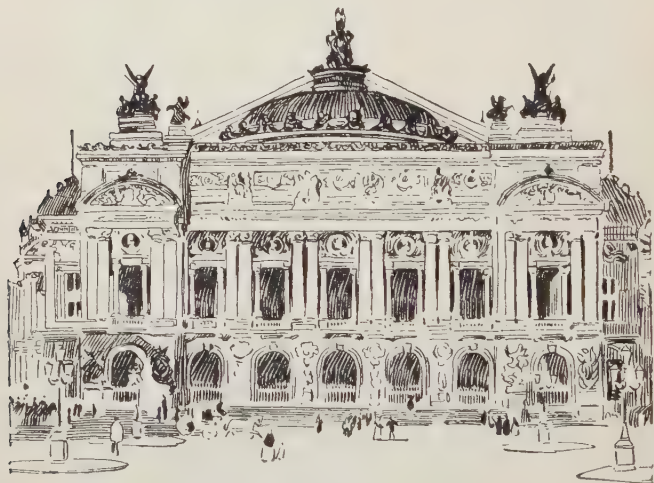
of energy (indeed, some would say "crime") and the deification of passion.

As further characterization it may be said that the romantic drama introduced to the stage for the first time subjects relating to the national life and national history of France. This was a feature against which no criticism could long hold ground. But there were other features which in the opinion of many were not quite so defensible. Instead of the dignified and orderly procedure prescribed by the classical drama, the romantic drama resorted to the extraordinary and the startling. Instead of using such methods of dramatic development and such local colorings as custom had made normal to the theatre, it employed methods of development and local colorings the main purpose of which was to excite the senses and inflame the emotions.

It will thus be seen that the "romantic drama" tended to become mere melodrama. It was saved from descending to this fate simply by the innate genius of its main expounders. Hugo was a lyric poet of incomparable power, and his dramas, though they failed as stage plays, have an enduring place in literature because of the lyric element that is in them. Dumas, again, had a sense of the value of mystery and solution, a sense of dramatic climax, which no looseness of artistic principle could destroy, and his inventive faculty was equal to his needs. His plays, therefore, despite their infringement of the "proprieties," held their own not only during his own day, but for a long time after. De Vigny, too, had naturally a too acute sense for art to be long the subject of that spirit of disorder and rebellion which unfortunately was only too characteristic of the genius of many of the early romanticists. His plays, therefore, also have a permanent place in literature.

The "rebellion" of the romanticists, however, had one

influence for good that is not likely ever to be gainsaid. Never since 1830 has the French drama been devoted or hidebound to one ideal of art. The pendulum that swung from classicism to romanticism has been seen to swing back again, at least a part of the way, to classicism; and



THE PARIS OPERA HOUSE.

from idealism it has swung to realism and naturalism, and back, at least a part of the way, to idealism again. And no one asserts that it can remain, or ever ought to remain, in one position. Every work of dramatic art, like every work of every other kind of art, must, as Hugo himself asserted, be judged for and by itself.

After the dramatists of the great romantic epoch (say from Victor Hugo's "*Cromwell*" in 1827 to his "*Les Burgraves*" in 1843) there is no dramatist whose rank has become a part of literature until the name of Augier is reached. ÉMILE AUGIER (1820-1889) was the chief repre-

sentative of what has been called the "school of good sense" in the drama. The principal characteristic of this school was its championing of the ordinary and common-sense notions of life—love, virtue, honor, honesty, business, money, politics, etc.—against the somewhat extravagant and very unreal notions of these subjects oftentimes entertained by the romanticists. The school, therefore, exemplified a differentiation from romanticism toward realism. A further differentiation in the direction of realism has been made by that more recent and much more eminent exponent of the dramatic art who is the subject of our special notice, VICTORIEN SARDOU (b. 1831).

Associated with Augier in the "school of good sense," and sometimes called the head of the school, was PONSARD (1824-1867). Ponsard, however, was scarcely a realist. He was rather a classicist, and may be taken as the chief representative of the reaction we have spoken of from romanticism back again to classicism or semi-classicism.

A contemporary of all the earlier dramatists we have mentioned was one whose work, so far as the play-going public was concerned, was of more account than all of them put together—EUGÈNE SCRIBE (1791-1861). But Scribe's work, though unequaled in its time for its suitability to the actual needs of the theatre, was not considered literature, even in its own day.

It should be said that several great writers of the period now under review, whose work we have considered under other heads, also contributed occasionally and with great effect to dramatic literature. The more important of these were De Musset, George Sand, Jules Sandeau, and Octave Feuillet. Even Balzac was a dramatist. The poet Banville, also, was a poetical dramatist.

The most important name in the history of the development of the drama in recent years is that of ALEXANDRE



DUMAS (1824-1895). Dumas the younger, or Dumas fils, as he is generally called, to distinguish him from his father, was only twenty-eight years of age when in 1852 he won fame and unexampled popularity by the dramatization of his previously written story, "*The Lady with the Camelias*." But it is not because of this first play of his, or even because of the almost equally popular other plays of his early years, that Dumas the younger is so important in dramatic literature. It is because he represents in his career and writing the whole course of the significant development which the drama of France has undergone in the last fifty or sixty years, from simple unmixed romanticism to simple unmixed realism or naturalism, and thence to the complex ideal—the ideal that embraces the end as well as the method—of "the drama with a purpose." It is, of course, true that Dumas's latest plays, those in which his conscious purpose of effecting some sort of moral or social reform is most shown, are not his best or his strongest plays, or those most likely to be enduring. But it is nevertheless true that in these later plays of his we have the example of a great dramatist, in many respects despite his lack of literary excellence the greatest of his time, boldly declaring that all art—that is to say, all literary art, including both fiction and the drama—to be true and worthy art must have a "social function," a "moral end." We repeat his own words: "All literature the aim of which is not perfectibility, moralization, the ideal—in a word, the useful—is a weakly, unwholesome, stillborn literature."



## XXXII. SARDOU.

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In every age when the drama has flourished most luxuriantly we can discover at least one playwright who seems to be the incarnation of the theatre. He is not a poet and not a psychologist; he is just a playwright, a writer born to provide the exact kind of theatrical entertainment which the greatest number of his contemporaries would most thoroughly relish. In Shakespeare's day Heywood was such a man—the Heywood whom Charles Lamb ventured to call a “prose Shakespeare,” and whose “*Woman Killed with Kindness*” has in it a note of true pathos discernible even now when the dramatic formula has changed, and when the older fashion of his simple play seems sadly faded. In Goethe's day Kotzebue was such a man—the Kotzebue whose emotional dramas filled every theater in Europe and America, and whose “*Menschenhass und Reue*” (known in English as “*The Stranger*”) deals with a theme curiously like that handled by Heywood in “*A Woman Killed with Kindness*.”

In France within the last hundred years there have been two playwrights fitly to be compared with the English Heywood and with the German Kotzebue. The first of these is Eugène Scribe, whose prolific production lasted through the first half of the nineteenth century, and the second is M. Victorien Sardou, who is one of the most fertile and abundant playmakers of the second half of the nineteenth century. Like Heywood, Scribe was the very



M. VICTORIEN SARDOU.

embodiment of theatrical skill; and M. Sardou is like Scribe, upon whom, indeed, he has modeled himself. M. Sardou might be described, not unfairly, as a Scribe brought up to date, with all the modern improvements. Taine declared that the art of playmaking was as susceptible of improvement as the art of watchmaking, and of the mechanism of the drama M. Sardou is absolute master.

Style has been described as the clothing of thought, and this has suggested to one acute critic the remark that De Quincey was the first writer who had been able to make the garment so stiff with embroidery that it could stand by itself without anybody within it. And the drama is an art so special and so peculiar that it can exist wholly without regard to the message it conveys; that it can even thrive and please without conveying any message at all. The plays of Heywood, for example, and of Kotzebue also, are little or nothing if we judge them as pure literature; but they are not to be despised if they are considered merely as drama. So adroit were these playwrights in the construction of their best works that these plays had the semblance of life, although they lacked the reality of it, although the characters were nothing, the meaning nil, and the morality non-existent. Heywood and Kotzebue used the same devices merely to amuse and to entertain which have been employed by Sophocles and by Shakespeare, by Molière and by Ibsen, to voice their philosophy and to body forth their vision of existence. Scribe and M. Sardou are mere playwrights, as Heywood and Kotzebue were; they are not dramatists (in the fuller meaning of the word), as are Sophocles and Shakespeare, Molière and Ibsen. It is as craftsmen only that they interest us—as experts in the difficult dramaturgic art. It is not as poets, or as thinkers, or as stylists, or as creators of character, or as philosophic observers of life.

Admitting at once that it is as a playwright and not as a dramatist that M. Sardou is to be considered, it must also be admitted that as a playwright he has exhibited marvellous skill and he has met with widespread success. Devoting himself chiefly to the plotting of his pieces, and never going below the surface either in his theme or in his character-drawing, he has produced a score of plays which after having been popular in Paris have been easily exportable to all the four corners of the earth. The comedies of Augier, the most vigorous of French dramatists since Beaumarchais, deal with deeper themes; they grapple more closely with serious problems, and therefore they cling too firmly to the soil of their nativity to be easily transported outside of France. But M. Sardou's pieces, whether comic, like the "*Pattes de Mouche*" (known in English as the "*Scrap of Paper*"), or serious, like "*Fédora*," depends on plot alone, on the ingenuity with which the story is contrived and continued, on the surpassing cleverness with which the incidents are devised and manipulated. As a result the name of M. Sardou is frequent on the playbills of American theatres, where the name of Augier is never seen. Rarely does a year pass in which half a dozen of M. Sardou's best-known plays are not performed in every one of the larger cities of the United States. "*A Scrap of Paper*," "*Fédora*," "*La Tosca*," "*Diplomacy*," "*Divorçons*," "*Madame Sans-Gêne*"—these are familiar to every habitual playgoer.

So clearly is M. Sardou's position recognized as the most popular of French playwrights that twice he has been induced by English-speaking performers to write plays to be produced in English before they were acted in French. Years ago M. Sardou wrote for Miss Agnes Ethel the rather empty and mechanical play which she called "*Agnes*," and which she filled with the potent charm of

her own personality; and now, only a few months ago, he prepared for Sir Henry Irving a historical drama called "*Robespierre*," produced very successfully at the London Lyceum theater this last spring. It is to be noted that when M. Sardou produced Miss Ethel's play in Paris (under the name of "*Andréa*") he had not the aid of her presence, and the piece failed. What the fate of "*Robespierre*" will be in Paris yet remains to be seen.

M. Sardou has had many failures—quite as many as playwrights far less gifted than he—but he has had not a few very striking successes. For the failure of two out of three of his plays many good reasons could be given; and it is not hard to see why the third should be more fortunate. He relies upon mere cleverness, and he has but little respect for the intelligence of his audiences. When they happen to discover this they resent it, and he pays the penalty of his trickiness. When he has been more happily inspired than usual, when his ingenuity surpasses itself, when he guesses at just the right amount of mere cleverness that the spectator will enjoy to the full—then he has his reward. His plays are all artificial, even the best of them; they contain no character that lives independently in our memories; they throw no light on any of the problems of life; at best, they merely amuse. But at best they are so clever, so ingenious, so adroitly fabricated, that we have no time to discover their superficiality, even if we had the wish.

To some of those who have enjoyed the performance of one or another of M. Sardou's plays this criticism may seem unduly harsh, and I must confess that it is open to this accusation. In extenuation I can only plead the belief, based on a long observation of M. Sardou's career as a playwright, that he deserves to be severely dealt with because he had it in him to write plays far better than those

he has chosen to write—plays solider with thought and supported by a true study of humanity. I believe that M. Sardou was intended by nature for a real dramatist, and not for a mere playwright. I believe that he might, had he so chosen, have been really a rival of Augier, a worthy descendant of Beaumarchais, a genuine disciple of Molière. He has preferred instead to be the heir of Scribe, and to take his place in the class with Kotzebue and with Heywood.

BRANDER MATTHEWS.

Columbia University.

## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

The scholarly and cunning dramatist, whose play of "*Robespierre*" Sir Henry Irving has just produced at the Lyceum, is a famous figure in the Paris which he knows even better than Macaulay knew his London. Slightly built, in height a touch below the medium, he stoops over his newspaper as he walks. The white muffler, worn in public and in private, is the one distinctive badge of his attire, which is otherwise that of a superior undertaker in his best. Two fine and curious eyes are set in a dark, smooth-shaven, and most expressive face, of which the chin is extremely forceful.

In a little velvet toque of his working hours he has a striking look of Richard Wagner. Certain of his friends have perceived in that mobile face a hint of Napoleon, a young Napoleon "not yet guilty of the eighteenth Brumaire"; and in his study, crouched over a manuscript, his long hair falling from beneath the velvet cap, M. Sardou becomes the Erasmus of Holbein in the Louvre. In the tournure of the figure, as in the face in repose, there is something delicate and feminine; but these traits are deceptive, concealing that vigor of health with





VICTORIEN SARDOU





which the race of great workers is almost invariably endowed.

He reads enormously and talks tremendously. At rehearsal (a bottle of English smelling salts in his hand or at his nostrils) he is alternately a tiger or a lamb. The imperial and imperious Bernhardt has quailed before



M. SARDOU'S CHÂTEAU AT MARLY.

him. He has made and spent vast sums of money. His possessions include a villa in a park at Marly-le-Roi, eight miles or so from Paris, and a town house in the Rue de Madrid. He has a passion for architecture, like Balzac, and is second to none as an authority on historic Paris. Like Charles Reade, he keeps a store of notebooks and great folios filled with cuttings and documents, "human" and other. He designs his own scenery and his actresses' costumes. His plays are written and rewritten until the original manuscript, illegible to him-

self, can be deciphered only by a secretary. He toils like a slave in his study, and forgets all his labors at table. He does everything in earnest, including his duties at the board, and as a trencherman he might have made a match of it with Louis XIV. He has been, and is, one of the most successful workers in Europe.—TIGHE HOPKINS.

## II.

One should see Sardou at work. This nervous little man, who perpetually complains of having a cold, from the moment he has determined upon a subject is no longer master of himself. He not only writes his plays, but performs them in his room with an enthusiasm and precision worthy the envy of many a great actor. At the rehearsals his appearance is itself a comedy. It is generally in winter that his plays are performed, as he detests having them represented in summer. He comes on the stage generally in an immense overcoat, as a matter of course of chestnut color, covered to his eyes by a huge white muffler, and a heavy traveling rug on his arm. He seats himself and envelops his limbs in the latter. One would fancy him an invalid unable to stir from his chair, to whom the flight of a fly is a matter of vexation. But so soon as the rehearsal begins he forgets his cold, throws off his superfluous clothing, and springs to his feet with the agility of a clown. When a performer does not suit him he will shout, "Not that way! Not that way!" and, taking the actor's place, will himself impersonate the rôle in a manner truly astonishing. He frankly forewarns the actors that he is going to be rough, that he will tolerate no nonsense, and always keeps his word. If, as is generally the case, the play reaches its rooth night, he then begins to be extremely charming to all of them.—MAURICE MAURIS.

## III.

When Sardou was nineteen his father gave him his choice of a profession and the young man chose medi-

cine. It was while attached to the Necker hospital that he wrote his first play—a tragedy in blank verse called "*La Reine Alfra*." The success this work obtained at a reading encouraged the young author to further efforts in the same direction, though he had no idea at that time that he could ever earn a living by writing plays. It soon dawned upon him, however, that he had no love for the dissecting-room, and he gave up all idea of becoming a physician. In those dark days of his life he might have been seen day after day wandering about the streets of Paris, shabby and hungry looking, seeking employment. At night in his cheerless attic, by the light of a single candle, procured by saving a sou from his economical dinner, he used to study the art of writing plays. Scribe he loved above any other master. Taking one of Scribe's plays, a play that he had never read or seen, he would read the first act; then he would close the book and map out what he considered would be Scribe's scenario of the two remaining acts. When finished he compared his work with the original, overjoyed if he had hit on a similar scene or situation. So he toiled on day and night with that dogged perseverance which has ever been one of his most marked characteristics. He was a close student of history, a fact that has been of great service in his later work. He was also an inveterate theatre-goer in those days, attending the performances at the Français as often as his means permitted. One day he pawned his coat to buy a seat at the opera.—ARTHUR WEYBURN HOWARD.

#### IV.

As Augier proceeds directly from Molière, so Sardou's first master was Eugène Scribe. Sardou, however, has employed his talent in many diverse styles; not to speak of his "*Patric*," one of our best contemporary dramas, certain of his comedies of manners fall little short of masterpieces were their conception more vigorous and their execution better sustained.

Sardou places silhouettes rather than types upon the stage. He neglects features of general significance in favor of curious and amusing details, which procure his works immediate success by compromising that of the future. He often disintegrates a character by incorporating it in three or four persons, in each of which we find one of its aspects; but as the peculiarities to which he directs his analysis are too trifling to hold our attention he is naturally tempted to exaggerate them, thus reducing them to caricatures, doubtless diverting, though without durable interest. His works denote an incomparable dexterity of composition, but we almost always detect their artificiality. His most "serious" plays lack unity because they so often bring the drama and comedy into too close contact, and because the action of the drama has no connection with the situations represented by the comedy. The severe simplicity of Augier and Dumas is to be preferred to the most ingenious of combinations. Movement is Sardou's essential faculty. It, however, very often pertains to the bustle of actors rather than to the logical development of action. Such rapidity of movement could not be consistent with the exhaustive portrayal of manners and characters. Indeed, how could we grasp the physiognomy of personages constantly changing place? Sardou's style is, perhaps, his most personal feature. It possesses all the peculiarly dramatic qualities of *éclat*, spirit, here and there color, and everywhere vivacity of movement. It is a style suited only to the stage, for it is sometimes wanting in accuracy and almost always in breadth.—PELLISSIER.

## V.

Although the French drama of to-day is not so bad as many believe it to be, still the dramatists, like the novelists, of France, have not taken to heart Dr. Johnson's warning: "Sir, never accustom your mind to mingle vice and virtue." Mr. Matthew Arnold quotes with approval Michelet's assertion that the reformation failed

in France because France did not wish a moral reform, and he adds that the French are lacking in the "power of conduct." Admitting the rule, M. Augier is a noble exception. He has an abiding sense of the importance of conduct in life, and he strenuously seeks to strengthen that sense in others by dwelling on the influences which make for it. "*Home*," the name which the English dramatist Robertson gave to an English comedy for which he had borrowed the plot of M. Augier's "*Aventurière*," is characteristic of all M. Augier's work. Home in his eyes is a sacred thing, and throughout his plays we can see a steadfast setting forth of the holiness of home and the sanctity of the family. This feeling will not let him be a passive spectator of assaults on what he cherishes. He is a militant morality, ever up in arms to fight for the fireside.—BRANDER MATTHEWS.

### XXXIII. RECENT AND CONTEMPORARY FRENCH WRITERS.—A SPECIAL REVIEW.

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No century in French literature has been so fertile, so varied, or perhaps so great in its achievement as the one now drawing to a close.



HENRI MARTIN.  
(Historian.)

During the third quarter of our century the prevailing trend of literature in every department was toward science and naturalism. Literature passed from the rule of the romantic imagination to that of the determinist philosophy of Taine. France exchanges such historians as Michelet and Thierry for men like Mignet, Martin, and Thiers, careful

chroniclers, critical analysts of the past. Where the older critics had been personal, impressionist, the new undertook to be systematic, comparative. In the old régime Sainte-Beuve is great because of his genius, Nisard because of his method. The method could be



learned, the genius could not. Hence Brunetière dominates the criticism of the later period, rather than the independent, critical essayists, Edmond Scherer, Lamaitre, or Anatole France.

This determinism of Taine had important literary results in poetry, drama, and fiction. Everywhere it led to minute observation of details, to what we call "naturalism," and to a conviction that environment is a determining cause of character. Hence writers were led naturally to deal with those extreme manifestations by which the laws of determinism could be exhibited, as it were, magnified. The typical naturalistic novelist, or poet, seemed to select the monstrosity, the exception, moral perversity, nervous disease. There was also in this gener-



PAUL HERRIEN.

ation a shifting of moral standards toward a fierce and militant pessimism, which was but a natural reaction from the roseate idealism of the romantic generation.

About the year 1880 this naturalism, pessimism, and determinism, reached its zenith and began to yield to the studiously unsystematic skepticism of Renan. A note of dilettante irony, of aristocratic aloofness, begins to make

itself heard and attains its best expression in the self-styled "symbolists." In general, however, the present decade may be best characterized as a period of uncertainty, finding momentary satisfaction in a protean inconsistency that supplies ever new and ever changing points of view. Out of it all it seems as if a more sober and purified idealism were slowly disengaging itself. But ours is not the prophet's function.

Bearing in mind, now, these two general tendencies, the scientific determinist, pessimistic, and the aristocratic, dillettante, skeptical, let us pass in brief review the chief poets, dramatists, and novelists of the second empire and the third republic.

For the greater part of this period all Frenchmen would have named as their first poet Victor Hugo, and truly, for he is the father of modern poetry in France, though he neither guided nor diverted its development. Beneath the mask of his rhetoric and prosody, we can trace in his descendants the spirit of Taine—pessimism, violent in Baudelaire, gloomy in Leconte de Lisle, sad in Sully-Prudhomme, frivolous in Banville, hedonistic and material in Coppée, statuesquely cold in Herédia—till at last the spirit of Renan seizes the French muse and gives us the strange and weirdly fascinating verses of Verlaine and Regnier, of Mallarmé, Maeterlinck, and the "decadents." French verse is apt to be a sealed book for American readers, and we will not dwell on these poets here, save to note that the works best worth reading and remembering in this group are the "*Poèmes Antiques*" of Leconte de Lisle and "*Les Trophées*" of Herédia. The weirdest are Baudelaire's "*Flowers of Evil*," and the most simply human, "*The Humble*," by Coppée.

Passing now to the dramatists, we note that naturalism here produced a reversion that skips back over the whole

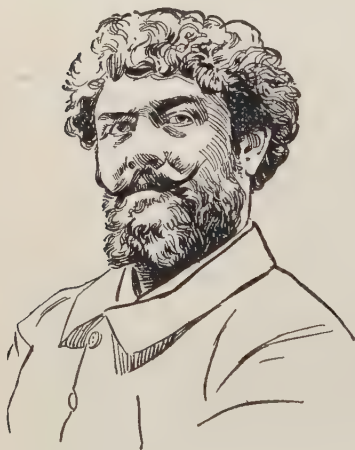
romantic movement to find its immediate ancestor not in Hugo, or Scribe, or Ponsard, but in Diderot, though both the younger Dumas and his great contemporary, Augier, learned much from the novelist Balzac. On the lesser playwrights of marked individuality—Labiche, Feuillet, Pailleron—we must be content to look and pass. It is not until we come to our own decade that the reaction toward idealism has made itself strongly felt in work of which Rostand's now familiar "*Cyrano de Bergerac*" may serve as an example. All efforts to conquer the stage for naturalism as represented by Zola and his school failed, and, indeed, from the fundamental conditions of dramatic effectiveness, could not but fail. We must confine ourselves here to some characterization of the work of Augier and of Dumas the younger.



RENÉ BAZIN.

Augier was four years the elder of the two, but Dumas was first to make his mark on the stage. Indeed, his "*Lady with the Camellias*" in 1852 was the beginning of a dramatic revolution as radical and more lasting than that inaugurated by Hugo's "*Hernani*." With it began the realistic study of burning social questions that is the keynote of modern drama. Dumas joined here the keen analysis of Balzac to the technical aptitude of Scribe. His

characters were studies from life. His plays have always a moral purpose, though they will seem sometimes unlikely to have a moral result. He writes to prove a social thesis, often a paradoxical one. He provides his plays with argumentative prefaces, and lets his characters develop his theories with more frankness and force than restraint or concision.



M. JEAN RICHEPIN.  
(Author of "*Miarkæ*.")

His general aim is to eradicate false sentiment, romantic passion, chivalrous love, and so to emancipate the coming generation for a more independent, virile development. The burden throughout is a note of warning. The most readable of his plays is "*The Money Question*," the most talked about, "*Claude's Wife*," the most acted on the American stage, "*Francillon*." He wrote novels also, but they need not detain us here.

With Dumas, in purpose, force, and seriousness, we may rank Augier, not indeed for his earlier dramas, or for his plays in verse, but for a group of social and political studies beginning with "*Mr. Poirier's Son-in-Law*" in 1855, and ending with "*Lions and Foxes*" in 1869. The former is the finest French comedy of manners in our century. It is an honest, healthy, hearty, keen, and sparkling satire on the bourgeois aspirants to aristocratic connections, and, as this class is always with us, the play has long been a favorite in American schools. Augier's



EDMOND ROSTAND IN HIS LIBRARY

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greatest strength, however, is to be found in a group of four dramas of Parisian social and political life, dealing with the literary proletariat, speculation, clerical intrigue, and feminine ambitions. If we read "*Les Lionnes Pauvres*," "*Les Effrontés*," "*Le Fils de Giboyer*," and "*La Contagion*," we shall know Augier at his best and get a vivid light on the blighting of young ideals in the materialized society of Paris under the third Napoleon. No dramatist ever had a sterner and loftier conception of his vocation than Augier. Upright and downright he combines irony and humor with robust and honest loyalty to his convictions.



PAUL BOURGET.

Passing now to the novelists, we may first dismiss Paul Bourget, whose visits to America and cosmopolitan connections have helped to a vogue that is hardly his due. The greater part of his novels are as ingeniously futile and

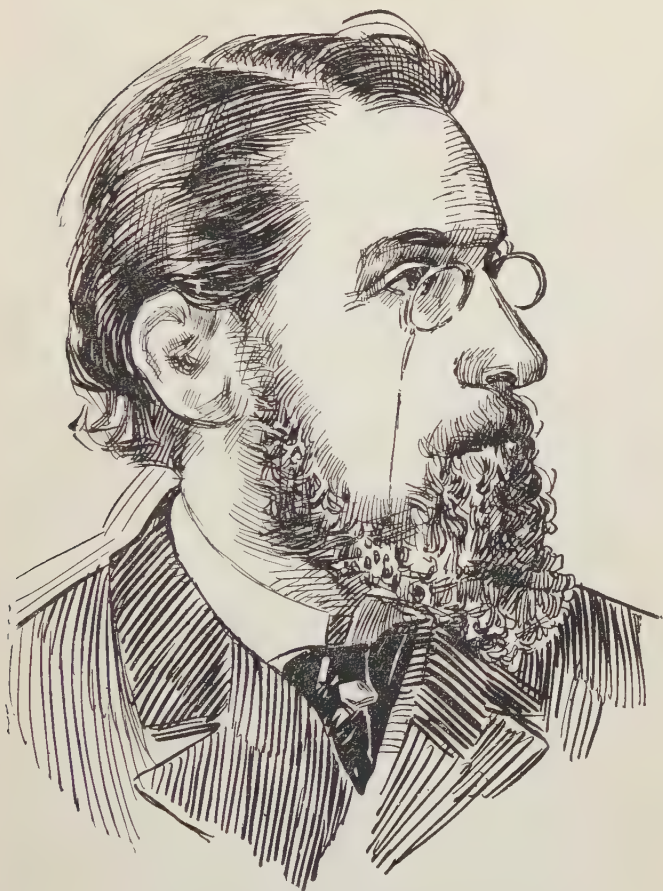


far less amusing than those of Gyp, whose *fin de siècle* sketches are the quintessence of that frothy frivolity of which Bourget's novels are the psychologic dregs. Other men of talented eccentricity are Barres, the prophet of egoism; the Goncourt brothers, Edmond and Jules, who seemed to seek to reduce naturalism to the absurd, and yet produced a really great novel in their "*Germinie Lacerteux*," and strangest of all these, Huysmans, who began his literary career as a naturalist of ultra crudity and has passed through all the stages that lead thence to the mysticism of medieval catholicity. It is difficult to conceive that two books so radically different as "*Down Stream*," with its studiously nauseating descriptions of cheap eating-houses, and "*The Cathedral*," with its architectural ecstasies and rhapsodies on plain-song, can be from the same hand. Huysmans's novels are a pilgrim's progress, but it is the progress of an exceedingly morbid and over-subtle histrionic self-tormentor.



PIERRE LOTI.

Less eccentric than unique is Ferdinand Fabre, the best analyst of French clerical life since Balzac. Unique, too, is the genial skepticism of Anatole France, that plays with evasive and evanescent will-o'-the-wisp light through such "breviaries of skepticism" as "*The Opinions of Jerome Coignard*" or "*The Osier Manikin*," and with a gentler grace in "*The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard*." Unique,



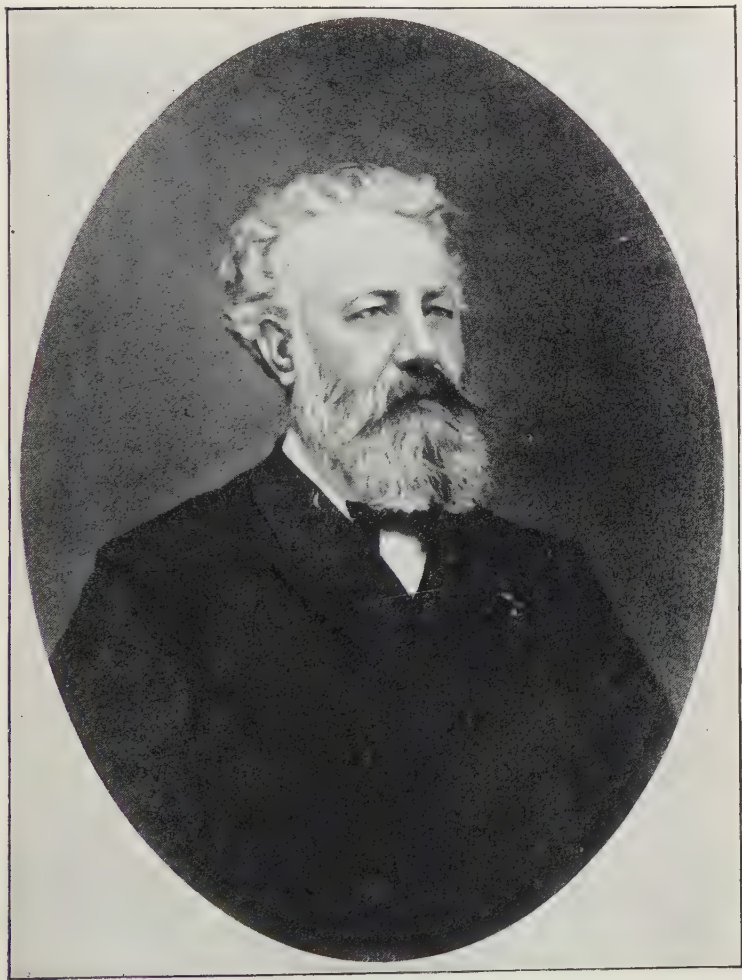
EDOUARD ROD.

also, but in higher kind, is the hyperæsthetic morbid beauty of Loti, author of "*The Iceland Fisherman*," and of the subtly beguiling, exquisite "*Rarahu*," or "*Loti's Marriage*," and other exotic tales all instinct with sym-

pathetic pity and intense, though resigned, melancholy, as plaintive and penetrating as the sighing notes of a violin.

If we pass from these exceptional writers to story-tellers of more normal mould, we may name first the smirkingly aristocratic Feuillet, a pinchbeck moralist, whose more democratic and immensely popular successor is Georges Ohnet. Other story-tellers whose interest is chiefly of the melodramatic sort are Cherbuliez, an excellent journeyman of fiction, and the cleverly optimistic Malot. More sentimental and often very charming is André Theuriet, who delights, like George Sand, in country idyls, fragrant of thyme and wild roses, and quite ignoring the barnyard. Similar urban sentiment in the lower classes finds its voice in Coppée, for the aristocratic butterflies in Droz, for the dandies in Rabusson and Lavedan; and, behind this varied orchestra, sentimental morbidity maintains its undersong in the labored jargon of science and psychology that makes up the body of the novels of Ricard and the Rosnys. Nor must we forget that prince of the detective story, Émile Gaboriau.

More purposeful than these purveyors of novelistic sweets and bitters is Edouard Rod, a most delicate analyst of character whose work seems growing steadily in force and clearness. And there are a multitude of others who might claim attention. Many a reader will recall one or another that he will think more deserving of a place than some that have been named here. But I pass them by, mentioning only in conclusion Prévost and Margueritte, who seem the most talented of the younger generation. Prévost is the successor of Maupassant, not so profound, not quite so pessimistic and cynical, far less powerful in conception, but almost as deft and unerring in attaining the lesser effects that he essays; Margueritte is the most virile of the younger writers, the representative of a deeper and



JULES VERNE



truer realism than that of the naturalists. He shows a healthy grappling with the problems of duty and moral self-control that marks him for us as the forerunner of the coming generation in the evolution of French fiction.

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## SELECTED STUDIES.

### I.

Loti's vein of irony is often that of Heine; it is dry, cruel almost, as is shown by Kervella's adventures. Heine, however, had known of fights of all kinds, pecuniary and others. Loti is now rich (through his marriage), and from the outset of his career he has never known anything less than comfort, which sufficiently shows that temper depends, not upon circumstances, but upon temperament and personal disposition. Melancholy by nature and by his almost Breton origin, the morbid spirit of his work is the outcome of his own feelings.—DE BURY.

### II.

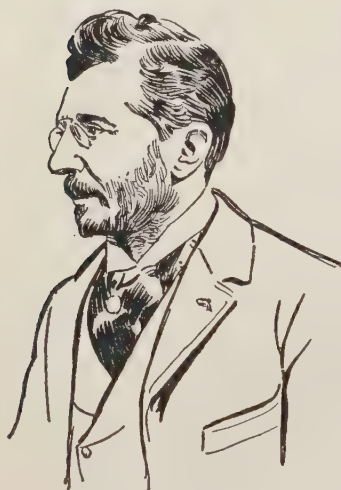
Loti's great merit is in having refreshed this literature of the world-weary by filling it with dreams and reconciling it with poetry.—RENÉ DOUMIC.

### III.

There is Brunetière the orator, but there was Brunetière the critic before, and since the appearance of the articles of January and May, 1895, we have Brunetière the philosopher, without forgetting that before, since,



and along with the orator there was Brunetière the eminent contributor to the review which to-day he directs. A subtle, profound writer, without pedantry, who for more than twenty-five years has had something fresh to say upon the worn-out themes of Sainte-Beuve, flashing his own peculiar clarity of interpretation over the seventeenth century, which he adores, over the eighteenth, which he execrates, over all these vanished ages.—DE BURY.



FERDINAND BRUNETIERE.

## IV.

A writer's reputation is apt to be made in spite of his solid merits. He is admired for his most superficial qualities and his most amiable defects, and it is these that make him the fashion. The affectation of laying his scenes in aristocratic circles and a certain finical sentiment, together with real delicacy of form, have won for M. Paul Bourget his success as a society novelist and

a moralist of the salons; and yet it is from this point of view that his work is most open to criticism. M. Bourget possesses hardly one of the qualities that make the society novelist. He has a somewhat awe-struck admiration for the elegancies of life which is the reverse of real elegance, but he has no lightness of touch and has never been able to rid himself of his scholastic habits and a professorial cast of mind. He has a sort of wearisome persistency, which never permits him to take up a subject without dwelling on it until he has exhausted the question, hence there are tiresome prolixities in all his books. His is not the charming art that plays over the



surface of things; he lacks frivolity and he lacks wit.—  
RENÉ DOUMIC.

## V.

One of the most remarkable incidents in the life of Augier was his duel with Charles Monselet, which grew out of certain strictures uttered by the latter upon "*Philberte*." Monselet, it is well known, seldom crossed the threshold of a theatre. Yet his dramatic criticisms had in Paris great weight. To the just reproaches which his method justified, he, like Lireux, coolly replied: "I never go to see a play, you know, lest it should influence my judgment." After a first representation Monselet examined with scrupulous attention all that had been said by other critics. He compared the favorable with the unfavorable, the black with the white, and by dint of shrewd eclecticism he often attained that impartiality after which his fellows strove in vain. His criticism upon "*Philberte*" happened to be very trenchant. Augier determined to prevent his humbugging the public, and replied in language every whit as cutting as that used by his critic, and insisted upon his confessing that he had never seen the play in question. Monselet refused absolutely, and a challenge quickly followed. Pistols were the weapons chosen. Augier was a splendid shot, and Monselet's priestly embonpoint offered a very large target to his antagonist. When the principals had arrived at the spot selected for the encounter Augier's anger was considerably abated. His generous instincts overcame his thirst for revenge, and he purposely missed hitting his man. As for Monselet, it would have been only by a prodigy of chance that he could have done otherwise. The end of the affair was that the malcontents separated amicably.—MAURICE MAURIS.

## VI.

Although Rod's writings belong to French literature, he himself is Swiss. He was born at Nyon in 1857, and

studied at Berne and Berlin, and after a brilliant literary career was invited to the chair of professor of foreign literature in the University of Geneva. Starting with essays upon his first ideals—Leopardi, Schopenhauer, and Wagner—he has followed in his books, as a critic has pointed out, the entire revolution of thought with which men's minds have been in travail for twenty years: First, the inflexible rulings of naturalism and positivism—of facts, externals, experiences, limited by the contracted horizon of immediate reality; then the gradual modification of the reactionary movement, when facts began to be accompanied by explanatory and supplemental ideas—deprived of which they had been proved incomplete and sterile of conclusions.—GRACE KING.







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